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THE NEW YORKER

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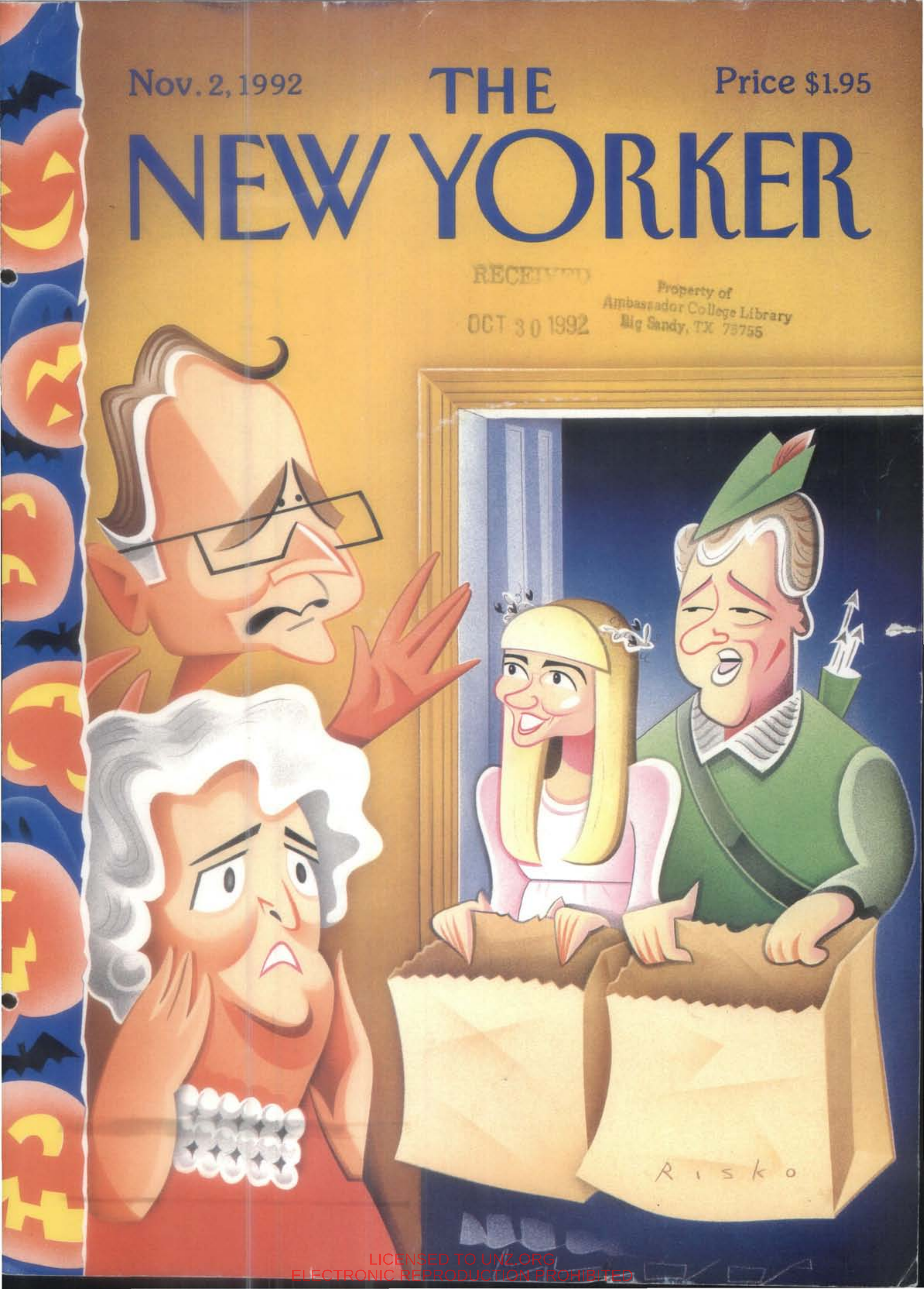

What happens wh
refuses to accept.

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In designing cars to meet the great strains of high-speed Autobahn driving, Mercedes-Benz has also managed to achieve the best longevity record of any luxury car sold throughout the past 15 years.[1]

In all aspects of car-making, Mercedes tends to take a long-term view of things. Even the odometer goes up to 999,999 miles (as opposed to just 5 digits on many cars).

Mileage is a point of pride among Mercedes owners. Many proudly display grill badges signalling 250,000, 500,000 or 1,000,000 kilometers.

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You'd expect a finely-tuned car like a Mercedes to be temperamental. Yet IntelliChoice Inc.[2] forecasts that the Mercedes 190E 2.3 and 300D 2.5 will have, on average, the lowest cost of ownership, over a 5-year period, of any car in their respective class.

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High performance cars genera don't provide the safety features

more conservatively-designed ca But Mercedes couples performar *and* safety engineering.

According to Automobile Ma azine:[3] "The 500E's handling ch acteristics are 'best in the world,'" its safety features are among t most advanced.

Every Mercedes incorporates comprehensive *safety system*.

In the event of a frontal collisi the forked structural members of t

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[1] Based on registration data for years 1977-1991. [2] The Complete Car Cost Guide. IntelliChoice, Inc., San Jose, CA. 190E 2.3 rated best in the under $40,000 luxury class. 300D 2.5 rated best in the over $40
continuous production, 1980-1989. Airbags are supplemental restraints. Please always wear your seat

en a car company
the word “can't”?

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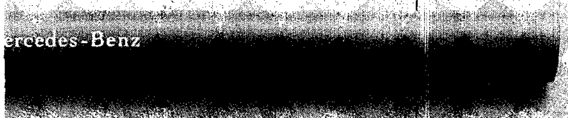

e head and upper body, while the
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move seat belt slack. Even the
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vay from the driver's foot. All in a
action of a second. While the
ssengers are cocooned in a rigid
el cabin, pioneered by Mercedes.

You ~~can't~~ build cars that are both innovative and dependable.

novation often causes aggravation, until the “bugs” are worked out. But Mercedes is so rigorous in its testing that new inventions tend to be dependable from the start. Like the 5-point multilink suspension–the most advanced way of keeping the rear wheels pointed straight.

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Mercedes, on average, have retained the highest percentage of long-term resale value of any car line.[5] So no other car helps you buy a new Mercedes like an old Mercedes.

The current 300SL is forecast to retain, on average, 75% of its value five years from now.[2]

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Sacrifice nothing.

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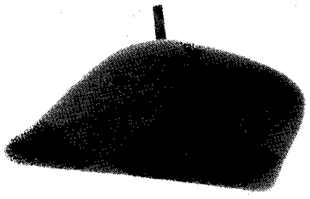
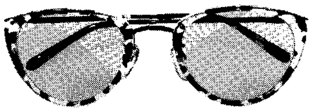
ry class (this model not available in California). [3]Automobile Magazine, April 1992. [4]Autoweek, April 1992. [5]Urban Science Applications, Inc., 1992. Based on analysis of resale data for cars in
992 Mercedes-Benz of North America, Inc. Montvale, N.J., Member of the Daimler-Benz Group.

Every fall, her love affair
with the city began anew.
At the first sign of that
pleasant chill, she donned her beret



[CHAPEAUX CARINE BERET]

for a brisk stroll. The brilliant
sunshine reflected back at her
from tall glinting skyscrapers.
Only her favorite sunglasses



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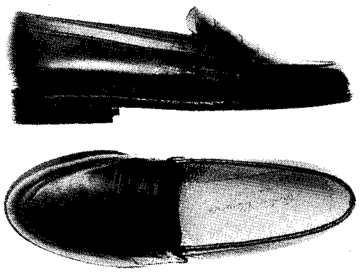
hid the excitement in her eyes.
Heart singing, head abuzz
with a thousand plans,
she began her journey
into our fair city, loafers



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THE NEW YORKER

NOVEMBER 2, 1992

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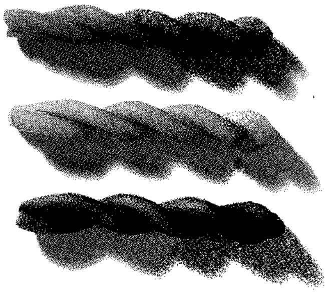
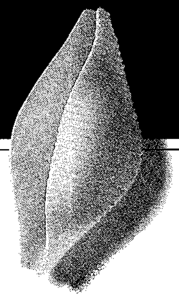
Cappelletti "Little Hats"
Stuffed pastas often need no sauce, only melted butter and herbs. For a more divine dish, try Cappelli di Prete – "Priest's Hats".

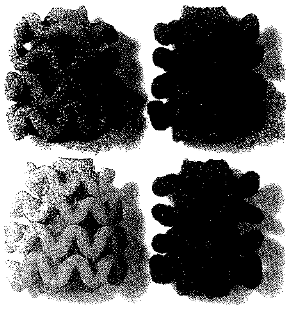
Fettuccine "Small Ribbons"
Best with butter and cheese sauce. Italians say twirling it against a spoon is "for milquetoasts". Be warned.



Gemelli "Twins"
For cheese sauces. Colors add little flavor. Squid ink in black pasta, for instance, adds no taste. To the relief of many, we suspect.

Have you ever eaten little hats, large ears, or radiators?



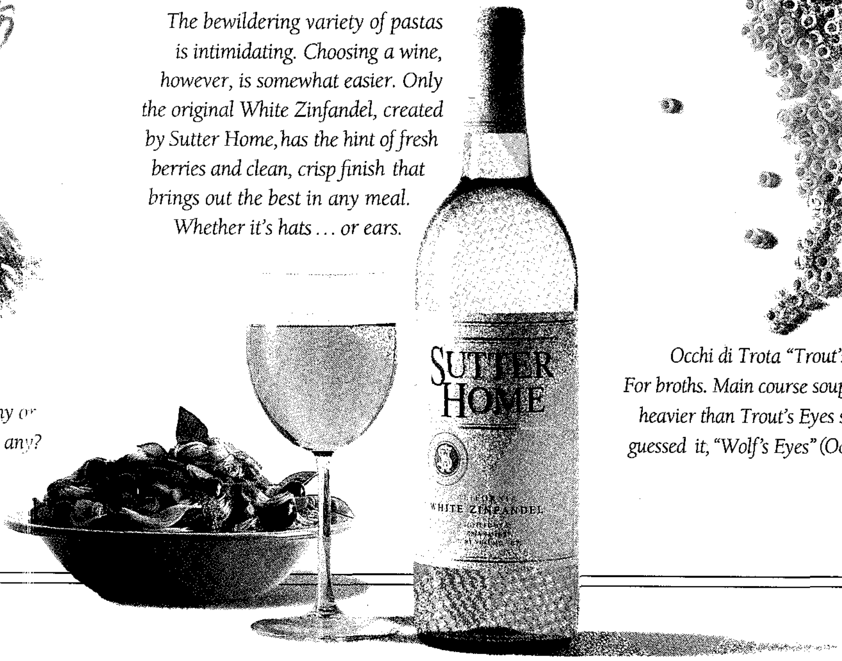


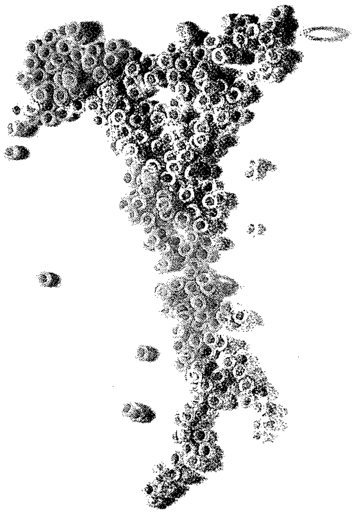
Radiatori "Little Radiators"
Italians eat it al dente, or "firm to the bite". Radiatori al dente is "Radiators, firm to the bite". Tough, those Italians.

Orecchioni "Large Ears"
Can be stuffed with wild boar, lobster, or – the most popular – leftovers.

Linguine "Small Tongues"
For delicate sauce. Or spicy or creamy or tomato or seafood sauce. Did we miss any?

The bewildering variety of pastas is intimidating. Choosing a wine, however, is somewhat easier. Only the original White Zinfandel, created by Sutter Home, has the hint of fresh berries and clean, crisp finish that brings out the best in any meal. Whether it's hats . . . or ears.





Occhi di Trota "Trout's Eyes"
For broths. Main course soups need pastas heavier than Trout's Eyes such as, you guessed it, "Wolf's Eyes" (Occhi di Lupo).

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RANDOM HOUSE

COMMENT

A VERY BIG DELUSION

As the fall campaign approached its end, a desperate George Bush decided to play the Moscow card. He played it low and he played it high. On the October 7th broadcast of CNN's "Larry King Live," the President pronounced himself "concerned" about Bill Clinton's student trip to the Soviet Union in 1969. "Larry, I don't want to tell you what I really think, because I don't have the facts," Mr. Bush said. "I don't have the facts. But to go to Moscow one year after Russia crushed Czechoslovakia, not remember who you saw, I think—I really think the answer is: Level with the American people." Thus did Mr. Bush leave the implication of treason hanging in the air. On a more elevated plane, the President has lately taken to boasting that he "won the Cold War." Sometimes Ronald Reagan is admitted to the victorious army. More often, though, despite the genteel instruction he received as a child to affect a stylized modesty, George Bush takes sole credit for the triumph of the West.

Mikhail Gorbachev, who is already an ex-President and is suffering embarrassments of his own these days, has closely followed the American election from Moscow, and when he hears the triumphal peep of the distant Republican juggernaut he is alternately understanding and perturbed. "Bush warned me privately not to pay any attention to what he would say during the Presidential campaign," Mr. Gorbachev said recently in an interview with this magazine. "I suppose these are necessary things in a campaign. But if this idea is serious, then it is a very big delusion."

Mr. Gorbachev is not above taking the credit himself for the ending of the Cold War, and his claim is far more convincing than Mr. Bush's. But the truth is both more complex and less personal. According to leading officials in the Soviet hierarchy during the Brezhnev, Andropov, Chernenko, and Gorbachev years, whose recollections are supported by newly available archival material, neither the early bravado nor the later diplomacy of the Reagan and Bush Administrations played the decisive role in the ending of the Cold War. Mr. Clinton's wisecrack is roughly true: Mr. Bush, in taking credit for the ending of the Cold War, is like "the rooster who took credit for the dawn."

Mr. Gorbachev's rise to power in

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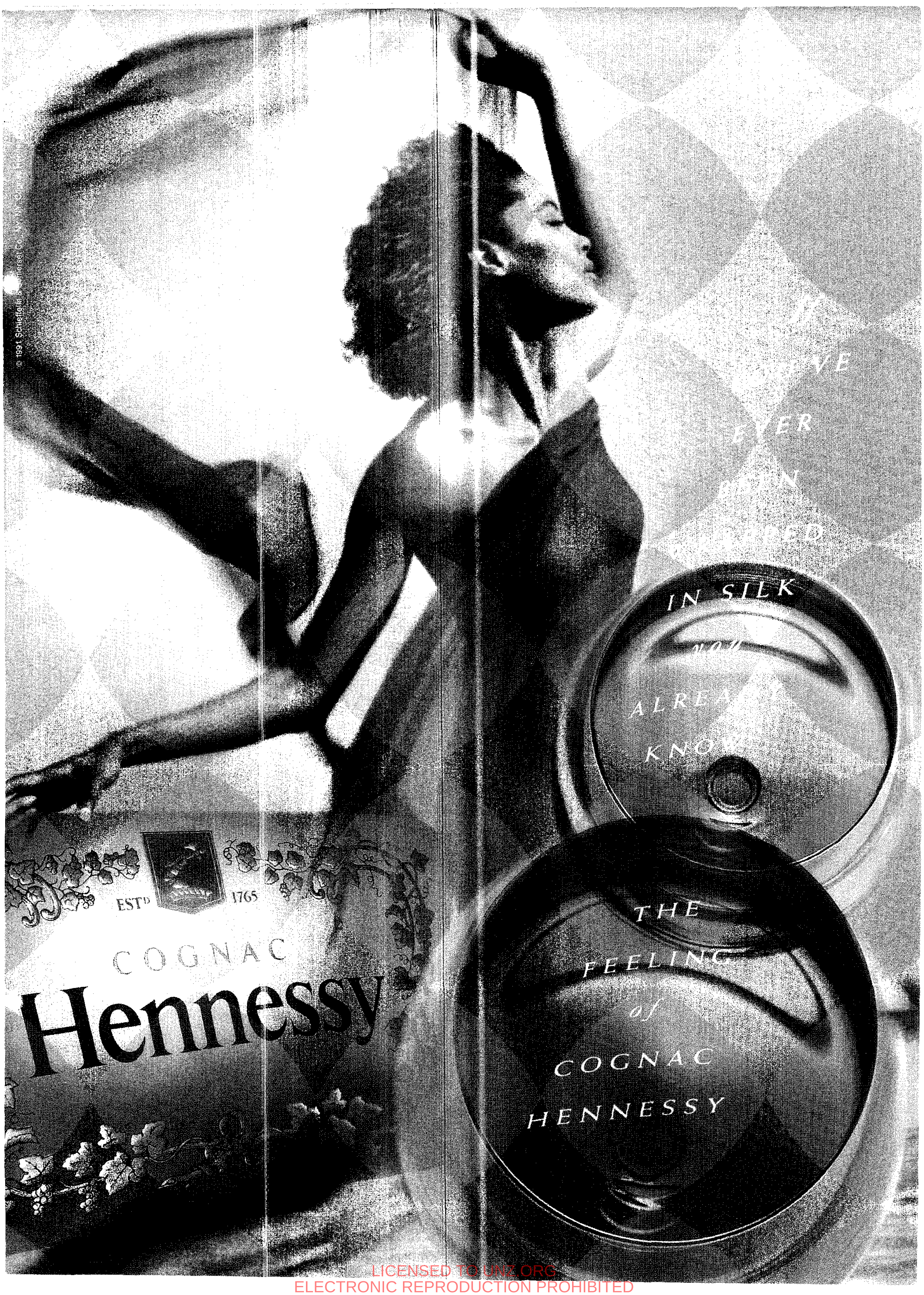
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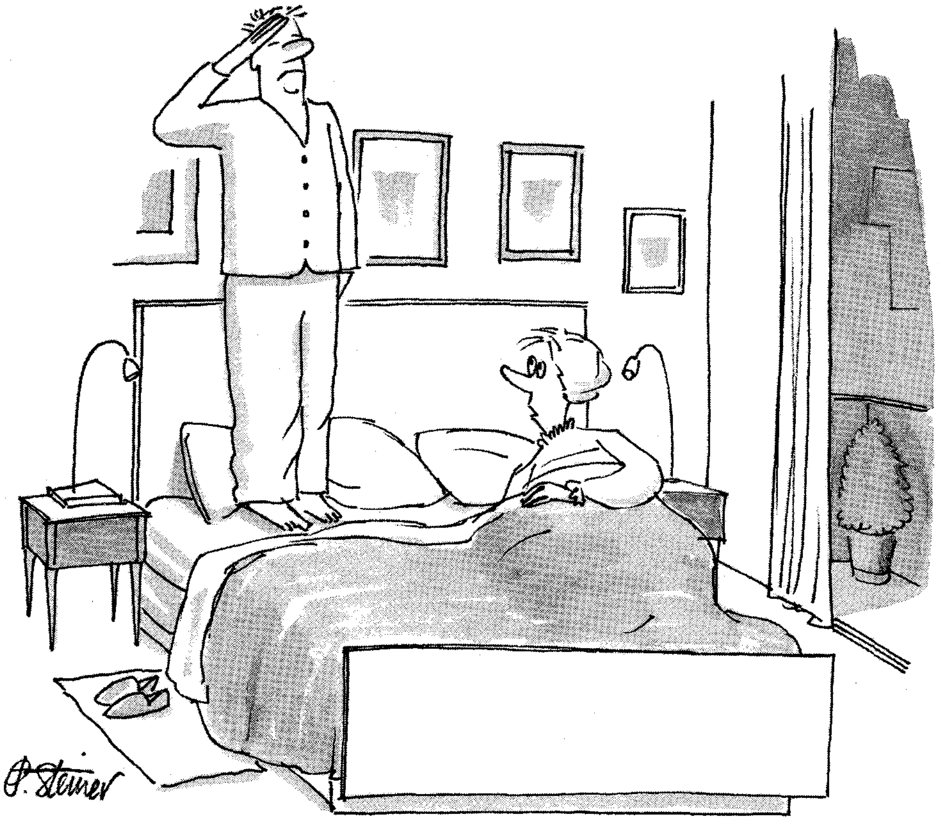

"Wake up, Tom. You're having the American dream again."

• •

March, 1985, represented an acknowledgment on the part of the Communist Party élite that the Soviet Union could no longer afford—financially afford—the sort of willful and morbid stagnation represented by the regimes of Leonid Brezhnev and Konstantin Chernenko. The one rival who gave thought to challenging Mr. Gorbachev in 1985 was Viktor Grishin, the hard-line chief of the Moscow Party organization. He prepared a program and a speech for the crucial Politburo meeting, which took place on March 11th, but he never got a chance to put himself forward. Mr. Gorbachev was thought of as a protégé of the technocratic reformer Yuri Andropov, only younger and not saddled with Mr. Andropov's horrific record on human rights. Once Mr. Gorbachev had enlisted the support of Andrei Gromyko, a leading figure of the Old Guard, the rest was easy. According to a newly available transcript of the March 11th meeting, not a contrary word was spoken. The vote for Mr. Gorbachev was unanimous.

Mr. Gorbachev quickly brought to the fore representatives of the reformist wing of the Party, people who had known for years that the disappearance of hard-currency earnings from Soviet oil wells and the almost complete militarization of the economy had brought the country to the brink of total collapse. By the time he came to power, almost no one in Soviet society—members of the Central Committee included—cared much for Marxism-Leninism; Mr. Gorbachev administered the ideological coup de grâce by dropping the last, wan pretense that the Soviet system represented, in however degraded a form, a historically inevitable advance for civilization. The Soviet Union could no longer afford that fantasy and its corollaries—a war in Afghanistan, adventures in Africa and the Middle East, an empire in Eastern Europe. The Communist Party was in bankruptcy and had to make changes quickly or risk the worst. It was perhaps a fantasy of another sort for Mr. Gorbachev to believe that the worst could be avoided; but it was a useful fantasy, because it tended to help him resist pressures to resort to mass violence when things truly began to unravel.

Mr. Gorbachev's two closest allies in reform were Eduard Shevardnadze, his foreign minister, and Aleksandr Yakovlev, his all-purpose adviser. Mr. Shevardnadze is now embroiled in the bloody, operatic politics of independent Georgia, but Mr. Yakovlev is in semi-retirement, writing articles at Mr. Gorbachev's institute on Leningrad Prospect in Moscow. On being asked recently if the Reagan Administration's approach to the Soviet Union—higher spending on armaments combined with the rhetoric of the Evil Empire—forced it into a more conciliatory position, Mr. Yakovlev said, "It played no role. None. I can tell you that with the fullest responsibility. Gorbachev and I were ready for changes in our policy regardless of whether the American President was Reagan, or Kennedy, or someone even more liberal. It was clear that our military spending was enormous and we had to reduce it. It was senseless to pursue the same policy. There have been better and smarter Presidents. I can't say that Reagan played a major role. You can't take that seriously. It's just political propaganda."

Mr. Clinton could easily make the case that Jimmy Carter, the personification of weakness in the Republican demonology, fenced with the Soviet Union more effectively than any other President in the past twenty years. After the embarrassing spectacle of the refusal of the Ford White House to permit a visit from Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn for fear of offending the Kremlin, Mr. Carter made human rights a centerpiece of his foreign policy. Vladimir Bukovsky, a former political prisoner who now teaches at Cambridge University and is working in the Communist Party archives in Moscow, has said that the one thing that has surprised him in his research on the Cold War is just how much the human-rights movement "obsessed" the leaders of the Soviet Union. It should also be remembered that it was Mr. Carter who decided to answer the Soviet deployment of modern SS-20 missiles with cruise and Pershing II missiles, and who began funding the rebel fighters in Afghanistan.

Still, because the main component of the Cold War's endgame was the bankruptcy, ideological and financial, of the Soviet system, it is folly to talk of any one Administration's "victory." Both of our political parties deserve credit, to the extent that credit is due to the policies of the United States government, for the waging of the Cold War. But never mind. As Mr. Bush told Mr. Gorbachev, leader to leader, a campaign is just a campaign. Pay no attention. ♦

Photo: Minh Nguyen

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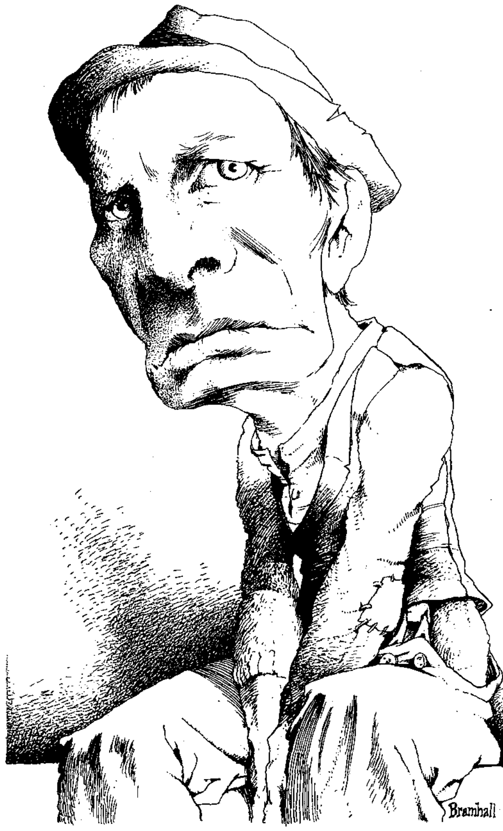
GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

Dublin or Nothing

IRISH themes continue to permeate the movies, and real-life Hollywood couples—Cruise and Kidman, in "Far and Away," Barkin and Byrne, in the upcoming "Into the West"—keep signing on. Several plays in town are Irish more by virtue of authorship than of marital status of their cast; for example, the Irish Rep's current offering, "The Madame MacAdam Travelling Theatre," by Thomas Kilroy, is notable for *not* featuring the younger of its resident married pairs, Patrick Fitzgerald and Madeleine Potter.

Mr. Fitzgerald distinguished himself in the group's last full-scale production, "Grandchild of Kings," which was an adaptation of Sean O'Casey's memoirs. Opening this week at the Vineyard Theatre is the revival of another O'Casey reworking, "Juno," a Marc Blitzstein/Joseph Stein musical based on "Juno and the Paycock." Mr. Stein's book has been revised for the occasion, and Mr. Blitzstein's score will include songs trimmed from the show's 1959 première. Less tinkering has gone on with the revival of a work by Mr. O'Casey's countryman and contemporary Samuel Beckett: "Texts for Nothing," at the Public. The work had its theatrical début in 1981, with Joseph Chaikin as the star; this time, Mr. Chaikin will direct and Bill Irwin will be center stage.



Bill Irwin in "Texts for Nothing"

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1	2	3	4			

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

A . . . My Name Is Still Alice—A sequel to the 1984 musical revue "A . . . My Name Is Alice." Conceived and directed by Joan Micklin Silver and Julianne Boyd. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200.)

Bubbe Meises, Bubbe Stories—A musical in which a granddaughter recalls her grandmothers and their stories. Written by, and starring, Ellen Gould. Previews Oct. 27-28. Opens Oct. 29 at 8. (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Cambodia Agonistes—A music-theatre work by Ernest Abuba and Louis Stewart, which opens the season for Pan Asian Rep. Previews Oct. 28-Nov. 3. Opens Nov. 4 at 8, and runs through Nov. 28. (St. Clement's 423 W. 46th St. 245-2660.)

Camp Paradox—A play by Barbara Graham, set at a girls' camp in 1963. Previews through Nov. 3. Opens Nov. 4 at 8. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

Jewish Repertory Theatre—Presenting a revival of **god of vengeance**, Stephen Fife's adaptation of a play by Sholem Asch. Previews through Oct. 31. Opens Nov. 1 at 7. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Joined at the Head—A play by Catherine Butterfield. Previews begin Oct. 27. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Juno—The 1959 Marc Blitzstein-Joseph Stein musical based on Sean O'Casey's "Juno and the Paycock," which has been revised for this production by Mr. Stein and the current director, Lonny Price. Preview on Oct. 27. Opens Oct. 28 at 8. (Vineyard, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

My Favorite Year—A new musical based on the movie of the same name; the book is by Joseph Dougherty, the score is by Stephen Flaherty, and the lyrics are by Lynn Ahrens. Evan Pappas, Tim Curry, and Lainie Kazan have the leads. Previews begin Oct. 30. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

On the Bum—Cynthia Nixon plays an unemployed actress on the road in this comedy by Neal Bell, which is set in the Depression. Previews begin Oct. 30. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

The Sheik of Avenue B—A Jewish ragtime and jazz-era musical revue conceived and written by Isaiah Sheffer. Previews from Oct. 28 through Nov. 1 (matinée). Opens Nov. 1 at 5:30. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824.)

The Show-Off—The Roundabout Theatre Company's production of George Kelly's 1924 comedy, with Pat Carroll, Boyd Gaines, Laura Esterman, and Sophie Hayden. In previews. (Criterion Center, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Solitary Confinement—Stacy Keach stars in a thriller by Rupert Holmes. In previews. (Nederlander, 208 W. 41st St. 307-4100.)

Spic-O-Rama—John Leguizamo's latest one-man show. It's the story of the dysfunctional Gigante clan, as seen through the eyes of a precocious nine-year-old. Preview on Oct. 26. Opens Oct. 27 at 7. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Texts for Nothing—Bill Irwin in an adaptation of Samuel Beckett's "Texts for Nothing" and "How It Is." Adapted by Joseph Chaikin and Steven Kent. Previews through Oct. 31. Opens Nov. 1 at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

OPENED RECENTLY

The Best of Forbidden Broadway—This tenth-anniversary edition of Gerard Alessandrini's long-running, ever-fluctuating musical revue is, as one might expect, a treat. There is some new material, but the sharpest sequences are still the spoof of "M. Butterfly" and the "Speed-the-Plow" number, "Madonna's Brain," in which David Mamet and Ron Silver try to teach Madonna to act and she ends up tearing off most of her clothes. (Reviewed in our issue of 5/4/92.) (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.)

Brother Truckers—The Ridiculous Theatrical Company presents a new comedy by Georg Osterman. (Charles Ludlam Theatre, 1 Sheridan Sq. 691-2271. Closes Nov. 15.)

Conversations with My Father—If you're looking for a totally satisfying theatrical experience, try the new Herb Gardner, a bittersweet memory play about a Lower East Side barkeep, his two sons, and the patrons of his tavern. As staged by Daniel Sullivan, with an ace cast led by the wonderful Judd Hirsch, the play does what "Jake's Women" and "Dancing at Lughnasa" would probably do if their authors were, respectively, more sophisticated and less sentimental. Grab this one. (4/13/92) (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Destiny of Me—A new play by Larry Kramer, which picks up ten years after "The Normal Heart," opens the season for Circle Rep. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

Falsettos—This back-to-back revival of "March of the Falsettos" and "Falsettoland," two of William Finn's three one-act musicals about a childish, self-absorbed man who leaves his wife and son for his not very nice male lover, is strictly for those who care. The appeal of Mr. Finn's trilogy has always been puzzling. It has a chronology as complicated as the Oedipus cycle and a dramatic sensibility akin to that of the Oresteia. But it has always seemed like banality set to music: shallow, unlikable people expressing themselves in shallow, unlikable songs. (Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Five Guys Named Moe—The guys are black dancers and singers of ability and spirit, who perform the songs (either lyrics or music or both) of the late Louis Jordan, among them "Don't Let the Sun Catch You Crying," "Ain't Nobody Here but Us Chickens," and "Is You Is or Is You Ain't My Baby?" This London import makes a merry evening. (4/20/92) (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

Fortinbras—The Signature Theatre Company presents a 1991 comedy by Lee Blessing. (Kampo Cultural Center, 31 Bond St. 279-4200. Closes Nov. 1.)

Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)—Cherry Jones has the lead in a comedy by Ann-Marie MacDonald. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210.)

Guys and Dolls—A lively production of Frank Loesser's perfect musical, under the direction of Jerry Zaks. Nathan Lane and Faith Prince are the leading guy and doll, and Tony Walton designed the stunning scenery. (4/27/92) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Jacques Brel Is Alive and Well and Living in Paris—A revival of the musical put together from the works of M. Brel by Eric Blau and Mort Shuman. Directed by Elly Stone, one of the stars of the original show. (Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. 475-5120.)

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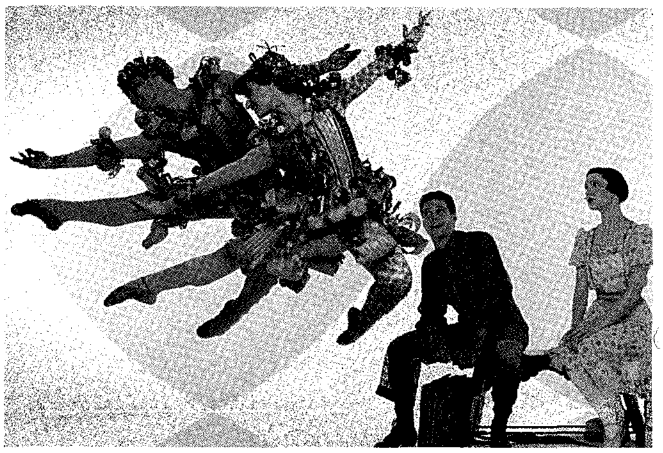
Jelly's Last Jam—The music of Jelly Roll Morton, self-proclaimed inventor of jazz, and, at the same time, an unsparing delineation of Morton himself. The show, an original if there ever was one, was written and directed by George C. Wolfe. In the starring role, Gregory Hines combines his astonishing talents as tap dancer and actor; Savion Glover, who plays the character as a young man, is worthy of him, which is saying a lot. Also present are Keith David, Tonya Pinkins, Wayne Mathis, and Mary Bond Davis. (5/11/92) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)



Patrick Corbin, Denise Roberts, Tom Patrick, and Caryn Heilman in the Paul Taylor Dance Company's "Oz"

The Madame MacAdam Travelling Theatre—A new comic drama written by Thomas Kilroy and presented by the Irish Repertory Theatre Company. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226. Closes Nov. 1.)

Mad Forest—Caryl Churchill's 1990 play about post-Ceausescu Romania. (10/26/92) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

The Night Larry Kramer Kissed Me—A play written and performed by David Drake. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 564-8038.)

Nothing Sacred—George F. Walker's version of Turgenev's "Fathers and Sons." (Atlantic, 336 W. 20th St. 645-1242.)

Oleanna—William H. Macy and Rebecca Pidgeon in a new play written and directed by David Mamet. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 307-4100.)

Remembrance—Set in Belfast, Graham Reid's absorbing and often entertaining play tells the story of a man and a woman—he a Protestant and she a Catholic, and both of them widowed and in their sixties—who meet regularly at a cemetery (each there to mourn a son who was a victim of the current "troubles") and who slowly fall in love. They are both beset by grown children who, in different ways, raise hell. The action is a matter of brief scenes, some of them quite funny. Milo O'Shea and Frances Sternhagen can seldom have been better than they are in the leading roles, and they are ably supported by Mia Dillon, Caroleen Feeney, John Finn, and Terry Donnelly. Terence Lamude directed. (10/12/92) (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 967-9077.)

The Roads to Home—In three short acts that are more triptych than play, Horton Foote depicts three gentlewomen of Houston, all of them thwarted or otherwise wounded, and one of them mad. Jean Stapleton, Rochelle Oliver, and Hallie Foote appear in the leading roles. All of them are good, and they are well supported (theatrically speaking) by Michael Hadge, William Alderson, and Emmett O'Sullivan-Moore, among others. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780. Closes Nov. 8.)

Ruthless!—This camp musical about a monster child star is harmless and amusing enough—assuming you can stomach the little girl. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076.)

The Sisters Rosensweig—Wendy Wasserstein's new play, with Jane Alexander, Madeline Kahn, and Frances McDormand. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

A Suffering Colonel—A farce written by Kenneth Lonergan and directed by Matthew Broderick. (Naked Angels, 114 W. 17th St. 727-0012. Closes Nov. 7.)

You Could Be Home Now—A one-woman show written by, and starring, Ann Magnuson. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes Nov. 1.)

LONG RUNS

BEAU JEST: A comedy by James Sherman. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.). . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.). . . **CATSKILLS ON BROADWAY:** A festival of ethnicity and all but unbroken laughter. (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 307-4100.). . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Loosely based on "Girl Crazy," which opened in 1930, this glorious show is actually a celebration of the music of George Gershwin and the lyrics of his brother Ira—nineteen songs in all—and also of the witty, imaginative choreography of Susan Stroman. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run celebrated its thirty-second birthday last May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.). . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.). . . **LOST IN YONKERS:** This family melodrama by Neil Simon, set in Yonkers during the Second World War, is about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.). . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **MISS SAIGON:** Oh, the horror! The horror! (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.). . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.). . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea Except for the sets, everything about this show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **THE SECRET GARDEN:** This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. It's subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **TUBES:** A performance work by Blue Man Group about art and other matters. (Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370.). . . **THE WILL ROGERS FOLLIES:** The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

DANCE

Class Acts

When Ethel Butler was eighteen—back in 1931—she went to the Neighborhood Playhouse to study with Martha Graham, for whom she subsequently performed for twelve years. A quarter century later, Ms. Butler was teaching modern dance in Washington, D.C. One day, a big, rangy guy walked into one of her classes, and right off she knew he was going to be great. His name: Paul Taylor. Speaking of him recently, she explained, "Everything in his movement just happened so magnificently—the quality, the dynamics." She turned up her hands and smiled. "It's like the first time I saw Merce. What more can you say?"

Well, perhaps a couple of things. This week, the Paul Taylor Dance Company, now in its thirty-eighth year, moves into City Center. The programs include the New York première of "Oz," which is close to Mr. Taylor's hundred-and-fiftieth work. This year, he founded a second touring company, Taylor 2. He also heads his own school, and he has brought back Ms. Butler twice as a guest teacher. "I love her," he said.

The basic theory taught in Ms. Butler's classes belongs to the era of the pre-Second World War Graham: the bracing attack, the shocking transitions, the sense of stone certainty in the footfalls, the ideographic gestures graven on air. "I believe in volume and depth, the Graham technique's original principles," she said. "I find dancing now so two-dimensional." She paused, smiled again, and added, "The thinking is two-dimensional."

Paul Taylor Dance Company—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through Nov. 8. Oct. 27 at 7: "Oz" (New York première), "Musical Offering," and "Company B."... ¶ Oct. 28 at 8: "Junction," "Epic," "Lost, Found, and Lost," and "Syzygy."... ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: "Duet," "Epic," "Lost, Found, and Lost," and "Syzygy."... ¶ Oct. 30 at 8 and Oct. 31 at 2: "Roses," "Private Domain," and "Company B."... ¶ Oct. 31 at 8: "Counterswarm," "Musical Offering," and "Oz."... ¶ Nov. 1 at 3: "Roses," "Counterswarm," and "Musical Offering."... ¶ Nov. 1 at 7:30 and Nov. 3 at 8: "Junction," "Duet," "Fact & Fancy," and "Andalusian Green" (première).... ¶ Nov. 4 at 8: "Oz," "Fact & Fancy," and "Company B." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212.)

Trisler Danscompany—In works by Joyce Trisler, Milton Myers, Charles Moulton, and Geoffrey Holder. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Oct. 27-30 at 8, Oct. 31 at 2 and 8, and Nov. 1 at 2 and 7:30.)

Alison Salzinger—With guitarist Andy Clark. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. 674-8194. Oct. 29-Nov. 1 at 8:30.)

Red Star: Red Army Chorus and Dance Ensemble—A hundred and thirty singers, dancers, and musicians from Moscow. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Nov. 2 at 8.)

Takarazuka Revue Company—The opening performance of an engagement that will run through Nov. 15, by an all-female dance troupe from Japan. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Nov. 4 at 7:30.)

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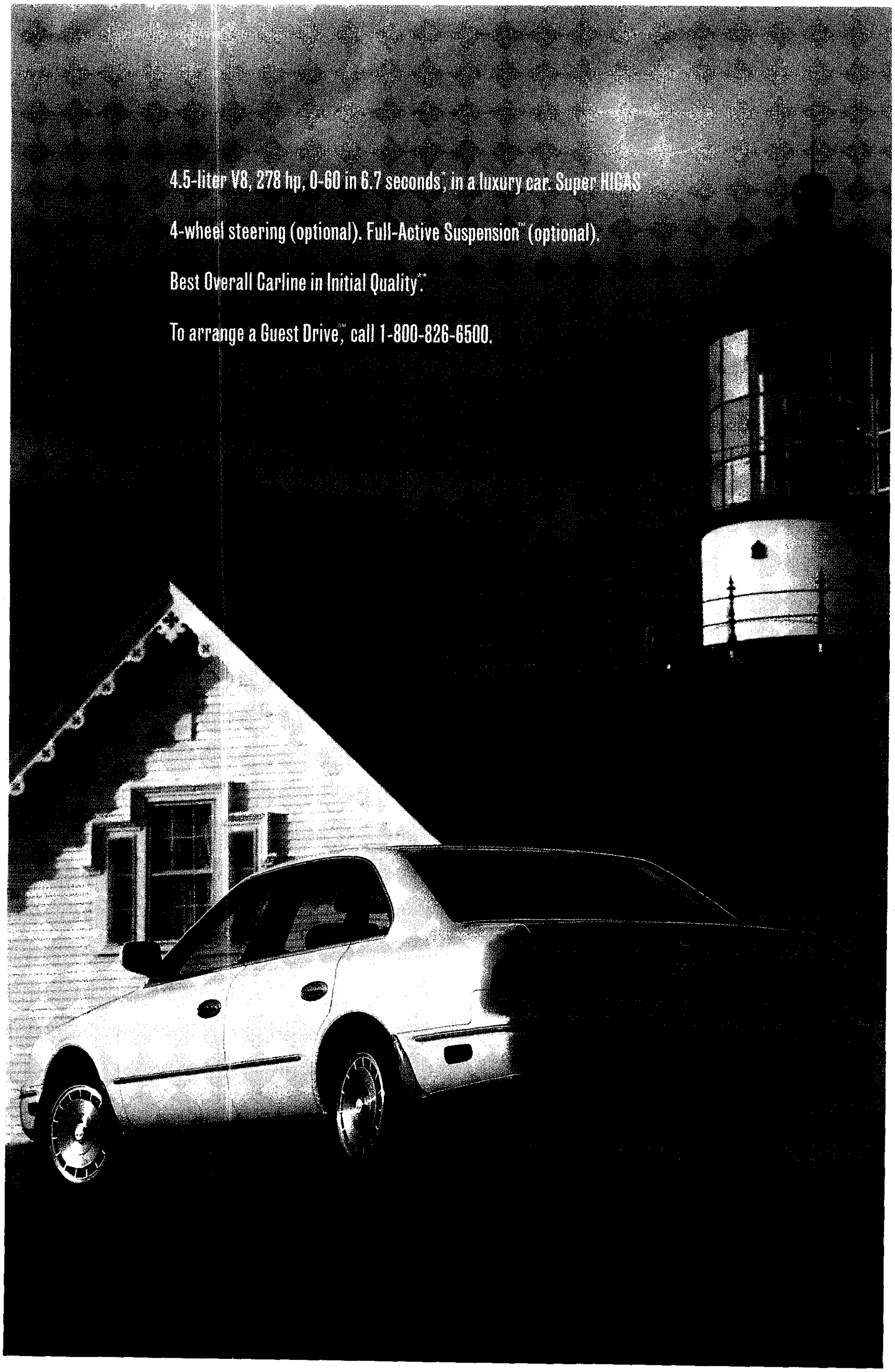

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NIGHT LIFE

Heaven Can Wait

THESE days, every alternative-rock band is at risk of being labelled a "Nirvana-be." And if Kurt Cobain, Nirvana's lead singer, happens to claim you as one of his favorite bands, you can almost count on it. Eugenius, the group in question (they'll be at Roseland on October 29 and Maxwell's on October 31), sprouted from the Glasgow cult band the Vaselines, who, in their brief career, landed a few singles on the British charts and found a partisan in Cobain. Guitarist-singer Eugene Kelly, the group's leader, went on to form Captain America, and that band quickly made a name for itself—a big enough name, in fact, that it caught the attention of Marvel Comics, who threatened to sue. Earlier this year, the band rechristened itself Eugenius, and Kelly released a statement in which he sarcastically apologized to his band's superhero namesake, saying, 'We have now realized that we were not worthy to work under his moniker."

Cobain has remained a fan—the group toured with Nirvana last year—but Eugenius actually has less in common with Nirvana, than with such fellow-Glaswegians as the Jesus and Mary Chain and Teenage Fanclub. Of course, all the fuss lately isn't about who sounds like Nirvana but who sounds like the *next* Nirvana—i.e., grungy enough to be hip, good enough to make big bucks. It's too early to tell whether Eugenius fits the bill, but they're off to a promising start.

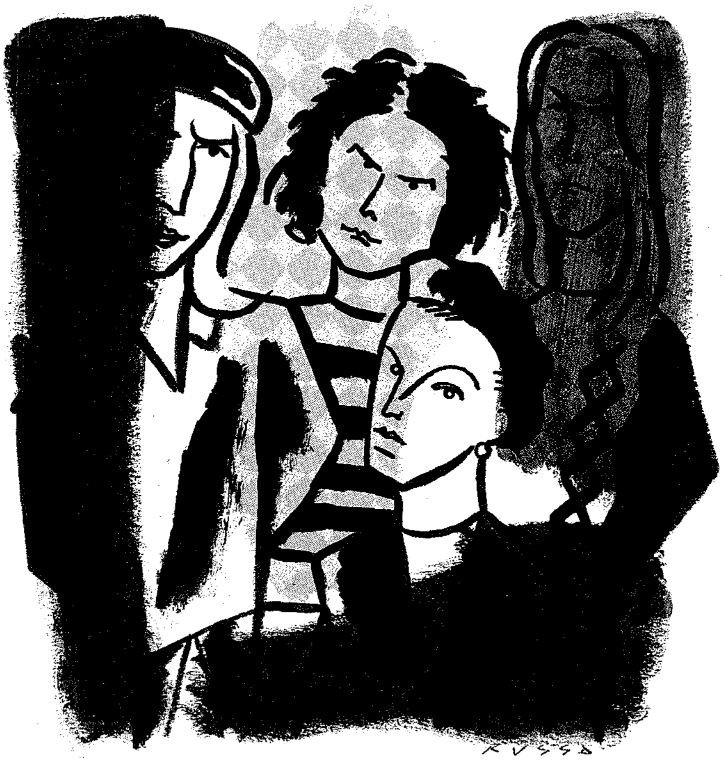
(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out some of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and nightclub proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ALGONQUIN HOTEL, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—"If people really need a fix of torch singing, they'll know where to find me," **ANDREA MARCOVICCI** said recently. The singer's past five seasons here have been such a success that this year the management has crowned her unofficial Oak Room queen. Her sixteen-week run will feature six separate shows, the first of which, "Just Kern," is currently under way. Ms. Marcovicci is a skilled vocalist who gives particular care to lyrical content. Shows at nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—A sleek, green-walled room with brass railings and mounted O'Keeffian animal skulls. Look closer and you'll find that the skulls are wearing earrings. After the show, be sure to check out the adjoining restaurant/tapas bar, which looks like the indoor food market of your dreams. **BONNIE FRANKLIN** begins work on Nov. 3. Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine, Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen, and Sundays at seven. Closed Mondays.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. **HOUSTON PERSON** and **ETTA JONES** are in action Oct. 30-31. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A busy jazz club, with a busy gift shop. **DIANNE REEVES** is on hand Oct. 27-Nov. 1; **DIANE SCHUUR** begins work on Nov. 3. Ms. Schuur, a Seattle-based pianist and singer, has been gaining ground in jazz circles since the early eighties, and has won two Grammys. She's a versatile musician, comfortable in jazz, blues, R. & B., and pop. In performance, she infuses everything she



Eugenius

plays with a strong rhythmic pulse, and she likes to connect with her audience. Music from nine. Dining.

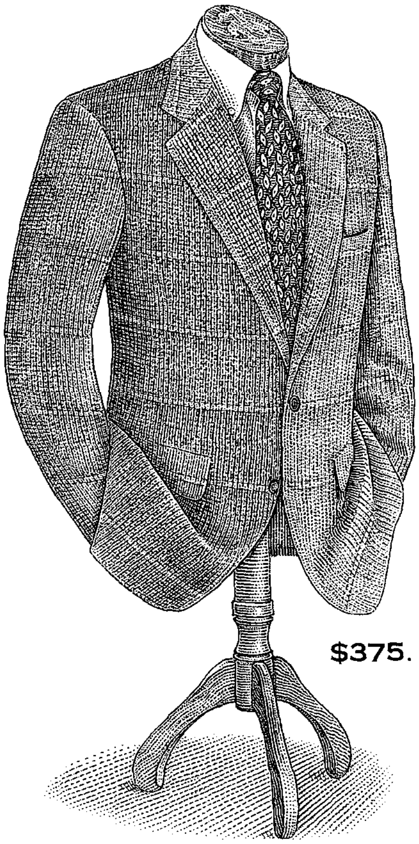
Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Folk and fries. **IRIS DE MENT,** who will share a bill with **GUY CLARK** on Oct. 28, recently released her first album, and it's a keeper. "Infamous Angel" is a spare, wide-eyed sort of country album. De Ment's voice is raw and fluttery—it belongs on a scratchy old record—and it can strike you as lovely or inexpressibly sad or both. Her songs are mostly pen-and-ink drawings of childhood and young love. They're performed on acoustic guitar, with pianos, fiddles, and mandolins coming and going so gently that you hardly notice them. In concert, De Ment is utterly charming—sweet and honest and just the tiniest bit goofy. The Bobby Whitlock band and the Vivino Brothers appear on Oct 29; Jim Messina turns up on Oct. 30. Shows usually at eight and eleven.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because, once the first chord is struck, the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. Music from ten. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—As of Oct. 27, the pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is once again home to **BOBBY SHORT,** who has spent something like a quarter of a century here. Mr. Short, who is accompanied by a bassist and a drummer, commands the room like a jovial, mischievous headmaster. His selections are uniformly witty and sly—Porter is a great favorite—and his own patter rises to the same standard. "I use a lot of French," he'll say with his crisp, haughty-sounding diction, "because I find that it makes the cover charge more digestible." Tuesdays through Saturdays at eight-forty-five and ten-forty-five. . . . ¶ Singer-pianist **BARBARA CARROLL** is at work across the hall, in Bemelmans Bar. Carroll, whose sets are usually equal parts jazz and cabaret, includes songs by Gershwin, Cole Porter, Harold Arlen, Dizzy Gillespie, and Billy Strayhorn, along with some of her own. She presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—The city's most famed rock club—a dark, narrow cave with neon-beer-sign stalactites and ancestral graffiti—is part sacred burial ground and part historic landmark, but it hasn't succumbed to nostalgia. The college-music hoedown known as the C.M.J. Music Marathon, which sets up shop in a variety of rock clubs this week, will be in swing here as of Oct. 28, when Crane, Girls vs. Boys, Bob Evans, and others share the bill. The next night, **CHRIS HARFORD** and a slew of others take charge. Harford, who just released a terrific début album, is a singer, guitarist, and songwriter who rose through the local club scene in the nineteen-eighties. He's got a hand in seventies rock, a toe in folk, and a finger in post-punk. With his gruff but plaintive voice and his fondness for muddied-up guitars, he sometimes recalls Neil Young. On Oct. 31, the stage belongs to **VELOCITY GIRL,** Magnapop, and Six Finger Satellite, among others. Velocity Girl is a great, young Maryland-based band that uses grungy guitars and indecipherable vocals to disguise what is, at heart, a pop sensibility. Six Finger Satellite, which hails from Providence, plays a heavy-duty guitar rock rife with strange influences—Devo, for one. Music from eight on Sundays and Mondays, from eight-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from nine-thirty on Fridays and Saturdays.

Continental Club, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St.—The Swing Dance Society holds Sunday-night meetings at this Polish meeting hall, which probably hasn't had a facelift since the swing era. (Until recently, it was known as Irving Plaza.) The dancers span all ages



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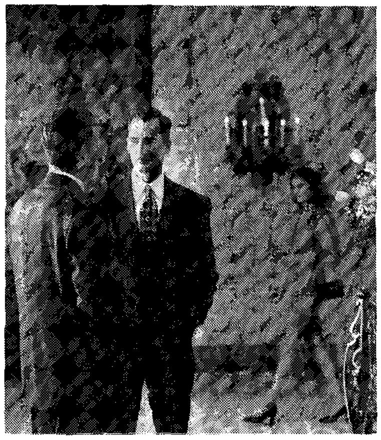

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and shoe sizes, but all share a passion for the Lindy Hop, a dance that involves a lot of whirling and the occasional display of underwear. Nov. 1 belongs to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS.** Sets from eight till midnight. For information on the Society, call 696-9737.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, then down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. **MORGANA KING** is here from Oct. 27 through Nov. 1. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the *Thomas Edison* of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Roy Gerson and Lynn Seaton are here Oct. 28-30 and again on Nov. 1; Valerie Capers and John Robinson start up on Nov. 4. Music from about nine-thirty.

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest belowstairs room that looks like a slightly spruced-up tenement apartment. There's cheap food, a Greater East Village crowd, and, every Monday night, **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mix of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, the Velvets, and various found-pop numbers. Sets from about eleven.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Guitarist **BOBBY RADCLIFF** is here on Oct. 28. Sets from nine-fifteen, except Sundays, when they begin at eight-forty-five.

MARQUEE, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A rock club, just off the West Side Highway, that is one of the city's main venues for college-radio fare. The **MEKONS,** who come in on Oct. 28, are longtime critical and cult favorites who have never managed to reach a mass audience. This Leeds band presents itself as a cross between a revolutionary commune and a seminar on itself, which would be pretty awful if these survivors from the days of punk didn't play such marvellous, haunting music. Appearing with the Mekons will be **AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB,** a San Francisco-based group that plays an unapologetically bleak variety of rock. The band's last album, a ragged and beautiful effort called "Everclear," won the band a slew of critical hosannas, not to mention a deal with Warner Brothers. (A.M.C.'s first major-label outing will be released early next year.) As for the band's live shows, singer-songwriter Mark Eitzel said not long ago, "I'm not going to drink a six-pack onstage anymore; I'm not going to smash glasses against my head anymore. . . .Why not just play the damn song?" Also appearing this week: Consolidated, Basehead, Proper Grounds, the God Machine, and Bad Brains (Oct. 29); and the Fluid, Laughing Hyenas, Rage Against the Machine, and Flowerhead (Oct. 31). Shows at nine.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—The bands that play here today will be playing somewhere more expensive tomorrow. This week: the Bats (Oct. 29); **AMERICAN MUSIC CLUB** and Shadowy Men on a Shadowy Planet (Oct. 30); the Pooh Sticks and **EUGENIUS** (Oct. 31); the Laughing Hyenas, Antiseen, and the Electric Nubians (Nov. 1). Show times vary.

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—There's more to Michael's Pub than Woody Allen, whose Monday-night Dixieland binges have given the place a little star cachet. Non-filmmakers can usually be found onstage here the rest of the week, in a main dining room that strives for the appearance of a British pub but looks more like a good old American family restaurant. **VERNEL BAGNERIS,** the creator of the musicals "One Mo' Time" and "Staggerlee," and Norwegian pianist **MORTEN GUNNAR LARSEN** are currently offering a two-man tribute to Jelly Roll Morton. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen.

RAINBOW & STARS, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a *lot.* **ANN BLYTH** and **BILL HAYES** begin a month-long gig on Oct. 27. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

RED BLAZER TOO, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—It may look like a plain old steak house, and the photos on the walls may look like Sardi's leftovers, but in the back room you'll find swing bands, Dixieland combos, and couples sprung from the legacy of Fred and Ginger. Mondays belong to the Smith Street Jazz Society, Tuesdays and Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Thursdays to Stan Rubin's big band, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and His Stompers. Show times vary.

RITZ, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—**HELMET,** which will be here on Oct. 30, plays punk-metal for thoughtful stage-divers. The music is hard-edged and unyielding, and Page Hamilton, the lead vocalist, sings in roaring, hardcore fashion, but half the band members are music-school graduates, which explains their interest in minimalism, dissonance, and other high-concept stuff. The **MELVINS,** a veteran Seattle grunge-rock band, are also appearing, along with several other bands. Rolling Stone **RONNIE WOOD** brings in his own group on Oct. 31. On Nov. 1, **JAMES,** the **SOUP DRAGONS, TOM TOM CLUB,** and Black Sheep share a bill. James is a Manchester, England, band that predates the so-called Manchester scene of recent memory. In fact, the group is old enough to remember another Manchester scene, led by Joy Division. James spent most of the eighties label-hopping and making fresh starts, and they finally broke through with 1990's "Gold Mother," which went platinum. The band's most recent release, "Seven," which came out last year, is full of grand passions, from the bleak to the exuberant. Their sound is a weird mix—impassioned folk, Tim Booth's jagged, heartfelt vocals, and Elizabethan-sounding trumpet work—but it comes together beautifully. In concert, this oversized band packs a wallop. As one member says, "We want people to leave feeling knackered and sweaty." Show times vary.

ROSELAND, 239 W. 52nd St. (307-7171)—A huge dance hall that was once home to swing dancers and is now home to moshers and other youth groups. **EUGENIUS** performs here on Oct. 29, at eight.

RUSSIAN TEA ROOM, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Upstairs, there's a small, red-gold-and-green cabaret, where **JULIE WILSON** begins an engagement on Oct. 29. Shows Thursdays at nine and Fridays and Saturdays at nine and eleven-fifteen. **ALAN BERGMAN** and others perform on Nov. 1, and **STEPHEN SCHWARTZ** and **JUDY KUHN** hold forth on Nov. 2. Those shows are at eight and, upon demand, ten-thirty. Dining and, of course, drinking.

SOUNDS OF BRAZIL, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—The closest thing in Manhattan to a rain forest, this venerable club has many selling points: tropical drinks, Brazilian food, faux palm trees, a thatch-roofed bar. The live music is primarily from Africa, Brazil, and the Caribbean, and the dance floor is usually hopping. **YOTHU YINDI** performs on Oct. 31, with the Phantoms. Music from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Thursdays, and from ten-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Closed Sundays. Dining.

SUPPER CLUB, 240 W. 47th St. (921-1940)—Upstairs at this gilt-railinged, lamé-curtained club is a plush little nook called the Blue Room, which boasts celestial-motif wallpaper and a profusion of deep-sea blue. The racket of midtown can't find you here. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays, from ten.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—A pretty serious jazz shrine where, to reach the rest rooms, you have to pass within inches of the stage. This is significant because, if you head to the bathroom during a set, the crowd is likely to think you're a guest soloist. Flugelhornist **ART FARMER** and his quintet are in swing for the next two weeks. Trumpeter **MILES EVANS'** electrified big band is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is nine. Dining.

Time Café, 380 Lafayette St., at Great Jones St. (533-7000)—In the basement of this sleek and trendy restaurant is an unadorned, windowless, midsize room where the **MINGUS BIG BAND** packs them in every Thursday. The fourteen-piece ensemble, directed by trumpeter **JACK WALRATH** and trombonist **SAM BURTIS,** concentrates exclusively on the tricky, cacophonous work of its namesake, Charles Mingus. Shows at nine and eleven. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Thanks to low lighting, muralled pillars, ironwork, and a beautifully restored old tin ceiling, this loft space manages to feel homey. The sound system can be overwhelming, but the place is big enough to accommodate both those who want to lose their hearing and those who don't. Zydeco, soul, blues, and rock are the main order of business here. **TRISHA YEARWOOD** performs on Oct. 28. In the past twelve months, Ms. Yearwood has gone from being a virtual unknown to being one of country's most visible performers, thanks to a hit single, a début album that sold over a million copies, and an opening berth on Garth Brooks' national tour. The twenty-seven-year-old Georgian's second release, "Heart in Armor," should solidify her gains. Ms. Yearwood is no purist: she takes her country with a few lumps of rock and pop. As for her singing, she has a rafter-shaking voice, but she also has great control, and she never runs roughshod over a song's more delicate sentiments. The **FIVE BLIND BOYS OF ALABAMA** appear on Oct. 29. Show times vary. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, slice-of-pie-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The **ROY HAYNES** quartet is here Oct. 27-Nov. 1; the **SHIRLEY HORN** trio begins work on Nov. 3. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA.** Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Home to an endless Summer of Love, Wetlands is a groovy, psychedelic, thoroughly Green night club. It is filled more or less nightly with young bands who like to play long, swirling jams, as well as throngs of young Deadheads who like to listen to them. **WEEN,** which performs here on Oct. 29, has just released "Pure Guava." The album was recorded in a home studio, and much of it is pure hole-in-the-head weirdness. In a world in which many bands give us everything but the kitchen sink, Ween gives us only the kitchen sink. A typical song will include two distorted guitars and a fairly lame drum track, on top of which the musicians, who call themselves Dean and Gene Ween, will rant and rave and joke around—occasionally bursting into laughter, or ending a song with the words "I think it's over." It doesn't exactly sound like a winning formula, but much of "Pure Guava" is inspired. Pato Banton, Burma Jam, and Inka Inka will appear on Oct. 28. Music at ten.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. The food is Italian, the atmosphere is pastels and soft lights, and the musicians, who set up in a room between the bar and the dining room, are first-rate. **JANE JARVIS** and **JACK LESBERG** will be here through Oct. 31. Music from eight every night but Sunday, when sets begin at seven-thirty.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

Some clubs you walk into and instinctively know they're going to make it. It's not the décor, the lights, the smoke, or how bartenders rate on the lust-for scale. The d.j. counts for something, and so does speed of coat-check, the size of the ladies' lounge, and—because they cause traffic jams outside, thereby making a location appear busy—proximity to an intersection congested with transvestite streetwalkers. But what really makes or breaks a club is its customers. Jackie 60 is in a dump, Café Tabac's food is worse than any corner deli's—but look who shows up.

Playground (565 West 23rd Street) has all the right ingredients—hot d.j., good sound, dark hallways, pool table, "cool" room, bathroom stalls with locks—but four kiss-of-death signs were apparent on a recent Saturday night:

1) Three Wynonna Judd clones were tribal dancing around two clutch bags;

2) People were talking in the middle of the dance floor and no one was elbowing or kicking them away;

3) Six couples got down without relinquishing their drinks;

4) The entire line in the men's room was pee-shy.

By 2:30, a few stragglers showed up at the club's entrance. "Ah, the crowd was cooking. You should have come earlier," said the sweet doorman (now there's a rarity). Unh-unh; *they* should have stayed later.

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Next Wave Festival—Belgian choreographer Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker and her company, Rosas, in "Achterland," a dance-theatre work. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Oct. 30-31 at 8. The festival continues through Dec. 27.)

Big Apple Circus—Featuring the flying Egorov Troupe, from Russia; a contortionist named Tunga, from Mongolia; Johnny Peers and his dog act; equestrienne Katja Schumann; and a host of others. (Damrosch Park, Lincoln Center. Through Jan. 10. For information about show times and tickets, call 268-0055.)

C. Colombo Inc., Export/Import, Genoa—A performance piece by Leo Bassi. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 302-6989. Oct. 26, Oct. 28-30, and Nov. 3-4, all at 8; Oct. 31 at 7 and 10; and Nov. 1 at 3. Through Nov. 8.)

Ice Theatre of New York—A skating troupe in premières and repertory works. With guest artists Gary Beacom, Toller Cranston, Maya Usova, and Alexander Zhulin. (Sky Rink, 450 W. 33rd St., sixteenth floor. Oct. 29 at 8 and Oct. 30 at 12:30 P.M. For reservations, call 924-0077.)

Babs Davy—Performing her one-woman show "Women and Children First: Outstanding Perk or Tool of Oppression?" (WOW Café, 59 E. 4th St. 460-8067. Oct. 29-31 at 8.)

Emergency Broadcast Network—A band that performs to a score of digitally reëdited satellite, cable, and network TV transmissions. Video monitors and possibly a smoke generator are also involved. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Oct. 29-Nov. 1 at 8:30. Through Nov. 8.)

David Cale—Performing a work in progress. (Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Oct. 29-30 at 10:30.)

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FOX
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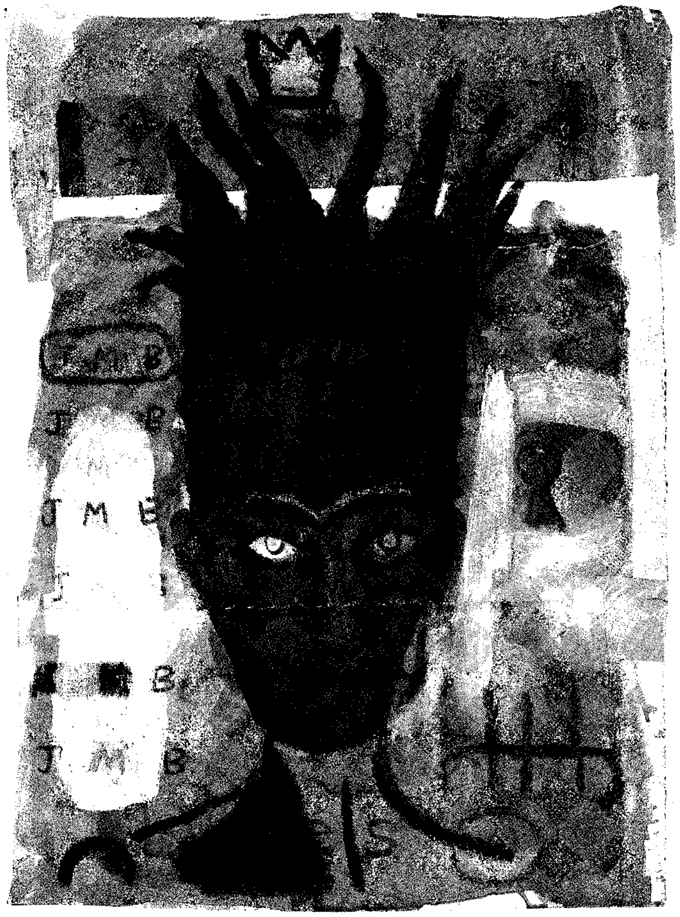
ART

Shooting Star

FROM the first appearances, in 1979, of his quizzical Samo verses on lower Manhattan walls, to his death, in 1988, at the age of twenty-seven, Jean-Michel Basquiat was not only a star of the force-of-nature variety but also a "radiant child," a blaze of conflicting energies, dark and light. After he died, the myth machines went into overdrive. There is, for instance, the tabloid notion that this artist, with his Twomblyesque Latin fragments and his cryptic quasi-haiku, was a wild child of the streets. There's the fancier notion that Basquiat had somehow lost it toward the end—just when he was starting to make more classically abstract paintings. Then there's the problem of the artist's estate, tightly controlled by Basquiat *père*, whose reputation as a father is at stake. The cast of characters includes outright forgers, ex-assistants, and academics on the make, all adding kaleidoscopic patterns to the truth.

Basquiat's opus is full of crowned black figures and names like Joe Louis and Charlie Parker: race has not made critical tangles any easier to sort out. But as the poet Rene Ricard says in his catalogue essay for the new Basquiat retrospective at the Whitney, "Jean was aware of himself from the get-go as a historical figure. The mechanical listing of other famous people was a shamanistic trick to deceive Clio into slipping him in with the rest. This is not as easy as it sounds. The muse of history is a cunning white woman who jealously guards her books against penetration by blacks."



Jean-Michel Basquiat

JOSH GOSFIELD

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—This museum has jumped into the Basquiat fray with a display (running concurrently with the Whitney retrospective) of two huge murals that Basquiat made in 1985 for the Mike Todd Room at the Palladium disco. They should lend drama and focus to the artist's cause. . . . ¶ The Magritte retrospective includes more than a hundred and fifty paintings, drawings, bronzes, and other objects. Through Nov. 22. . . . ¶ Part 1 of "The Century of Tung Ch'i-ch'ang" focusses on the Ming-dynasty artist's revolutionary movement away from representation and toward abstraction. Seventy-four works by Tung are juxtaposed with works by his contemporaries. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ The installation of paintings, drawings, and sculpture from the Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lille, includes works by Rubens, Goya, Delacroix, van Gogh, Fra Bartolommeo, and others. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ The third-century works in "Loma Negra, A Peruvian Lord's Tomb" range from small gilt nose and ear ornaments to large headdresses and masks. . . . ¶ Portraits—and self-portraits—by Thomas Eakins, Mary Cassatt, Winslow Homer, and other American artists. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings, drawings, and prints by the Spanish realist Jusepe de Ribera (1591-1652). Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ Color photographs by Leo Rubinfien, taken in Japan, China, and Southeast Asia. Through Jan. 3. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Henri Matisse." The long-awaited retrospective has been installed on the second and third floors. Through Jan. 12. (Plan wisely; call 708-9850 for ticket information. Tickets can be purchased in advance, and a limited number of same-day tickets are available on a first-come, first-served basis.). . . ¶ Since many of the museum's major works are on reciprocal loan to other museums in exchange for Matisses, the museum has chosen to reinstall a number of its remaining paintings, sculptures, and other objects in a non-chronological fashion, the idea being to explore the formal and thematic concerns running through the twentieth century in a curatorial manner that might be best described as gestural—like an *Artforum* essay from the seventies. There are a number of informative passages, such as Picasso's sexually charged "Demoiselles" and de Kooning's fierce "Woman I" displayed next to Louise

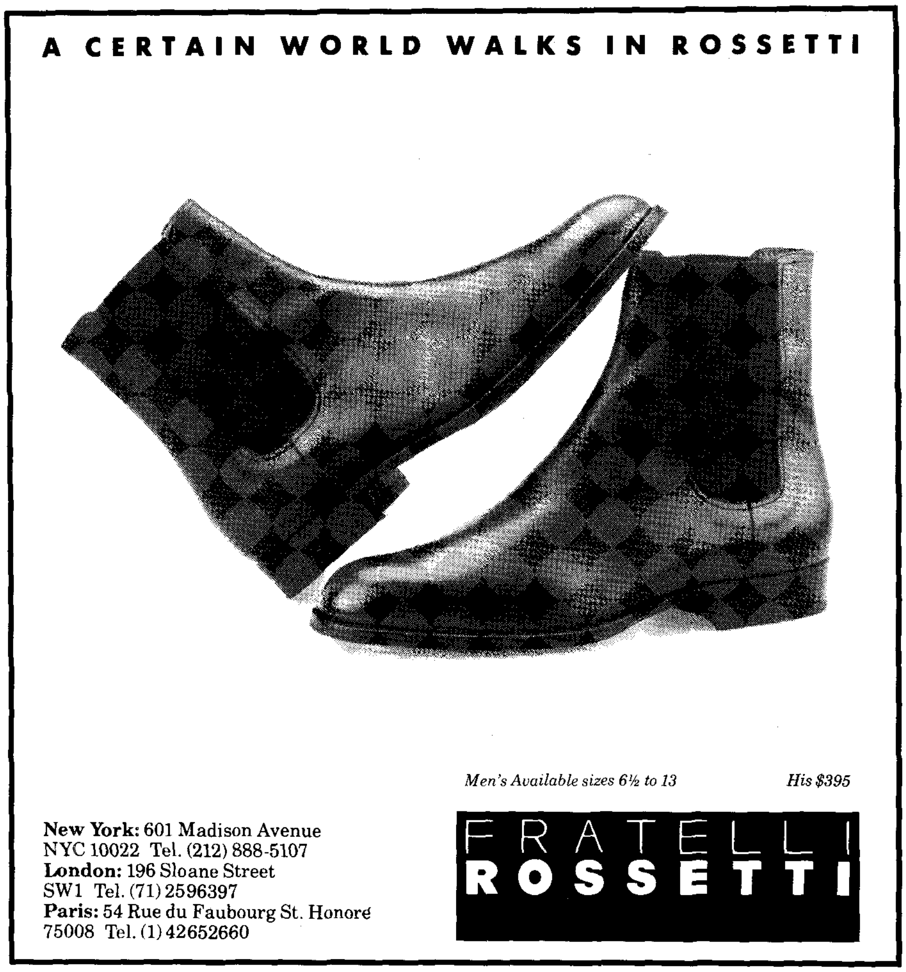
Bourgeois' defiant, ironically erect "Sleeping Figure." Likewise, there is a welcome mixing of media, such as Bellmer's "La Poupée," a book with surrealistic pictures of body parts, displayed beside a realistic Robert Gober leg. Still, many of the juxtapositions are far less revealing than they were presumably intended to be. . . . ¶ The "New Photography" series has expanded to four galleries, and this eighth installment includes eight artists: Dieter Appelt, Ellen Brooks, Darrel Ellis, Dennis Farber, Robert Flynt, Mary Miss, Gundula Schulze, and Toshio Shibata. Starts Oct. 29. . . . ¶ A hundred and twenty-five books, by such artists as Giorgio de Chirico, Lucio Fontana, Francesco Clemente, and Giacomo Manzù, are on view in "The Artist and the Book in Twentieth-Century Italy.". . . ¶ "The Photographs of Lucas Samaras" comprises thirty works from his many series of Polaroids. Through Dec. 1. . . . ¶ Two series of color and black-and-white photographs by Suzanne Lafont. Through Nov. 15. (Museum hours through Jan. 12: open Sundays through Tuesdays, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10:30 to 6; Wednesdays, 12 to 6; Thursdays, 10:30 to 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—"The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-32." This large exhibition is an extraordinary—and extraordinarily frustrating—effort. The term "radical," one of the most overused adjectives in modern-art criticism, has never been more aptly used than in describing this work. The show—and its catalogue, which weighs almost seven pounds—suggests artists' endless aesthetic disagreements, as well as the perpetual struggle between the élitism of the plastic arts and the populism of the applied arts. This legendary period is evoked with experimental paintings of every level of quality, with a tantalizing variety of revolutionary posters, textiles, and porcelains, and with several superb architectural drawings and models. Other noteworthy—and less familiar—works include the captivating constructivo-figurative paintings of Anna Leporskaia, Il'ia Chashnik's delicate Suprematist watercolors, a pair of severe Nikolai Suetins on plywood, and Georgii Zel'ma's photographs of ethnic revolutionaries. The spirit of Tatlin is everywhere here, though his work is almost nowhere to be seen. Zaha Hadid's self-serving installation of the work is at times a distracting imposition. Through Jan. 3. (Open daily, except Thursdays, 10 to 8.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM SOHO, 575 Broadway—"Marc Chagall and the Jewish Theater." Chagall's murals for the State Jewish Chamber Theatre, in Moscow, are in many ways ambitious, but they are not especially satisfying. Notable for their delicacy, for their mixture of figurative and abstract forms, and for the essentially modest scale of their elements, they have been hung side by side on a large wall, a layout that makes it difficult to imagine their installation in the theatre. The museum has supplemented the murals with several strong paintings from its collection, most of which, however, have little relation to the murals themselves; the whole exhibition feels remarkably thin. Through Jan. 17. . . . ¶ Some hundred Rauschenberg paintings, collages, assemblages, and conceptual pieces from the early fifties. Through Jan. 24. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday, Friday, and Saturday evenings until 10.)

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—A retrospective of nearly a hundred paintings by Jean-Michel Basquiat. Through Feb. 14. . . . ¶ Drawings from the forties by Alfonso Ossorio (1916-90). Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ A large exhibition of twentieth-century figurative paintings and sculptures from the collection. Through Nov. 29. (Open Wednesdays, and Fridays through Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—Meg Webster's installation, titled "Running," consists of a stream of water and an adjacent resource room with a computer and books on



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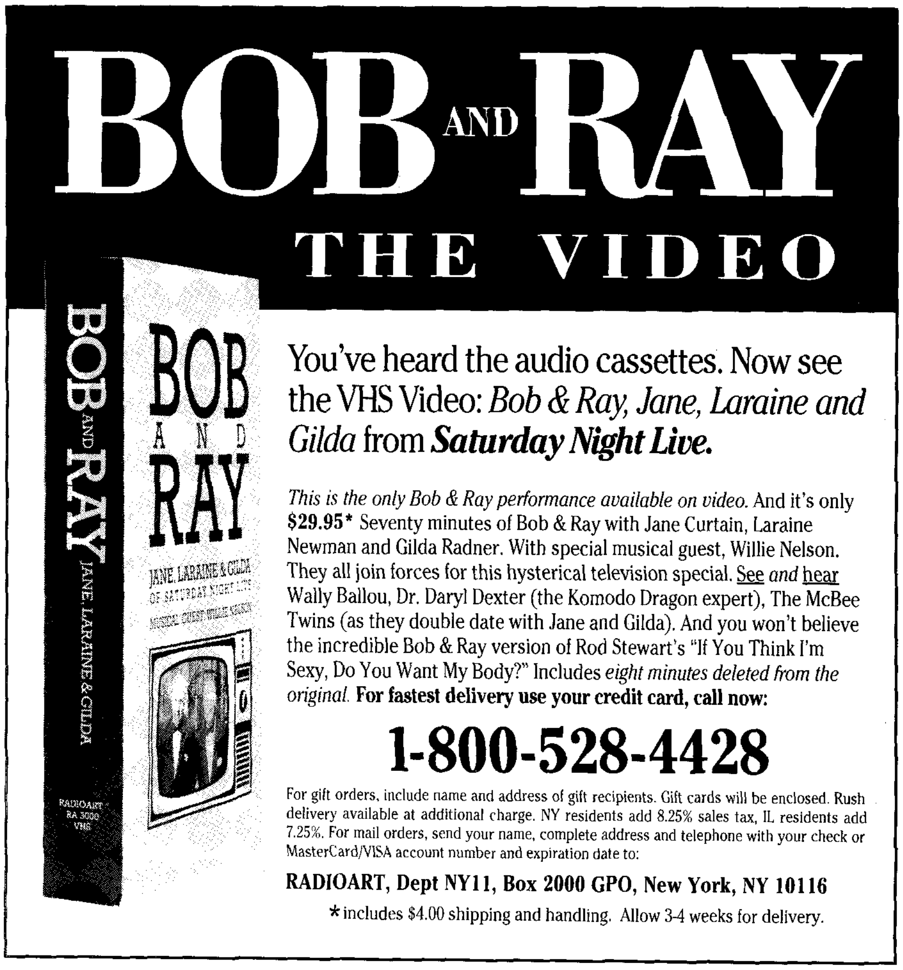

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ART—Cont’d

ecology. Through Jan. 3. . . . ¶ “Fantasy Furniture” is a collection of wacky nineteenth-century pieces from around the world. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—“Cultures at Crossroads: Southeast Asian Textiles from the Australian National Gallery.” Seventy-nine objects, dating from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth, from Indonesia, Myanmar, Thailand, India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, and the Philippines. Through Jan. 17. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

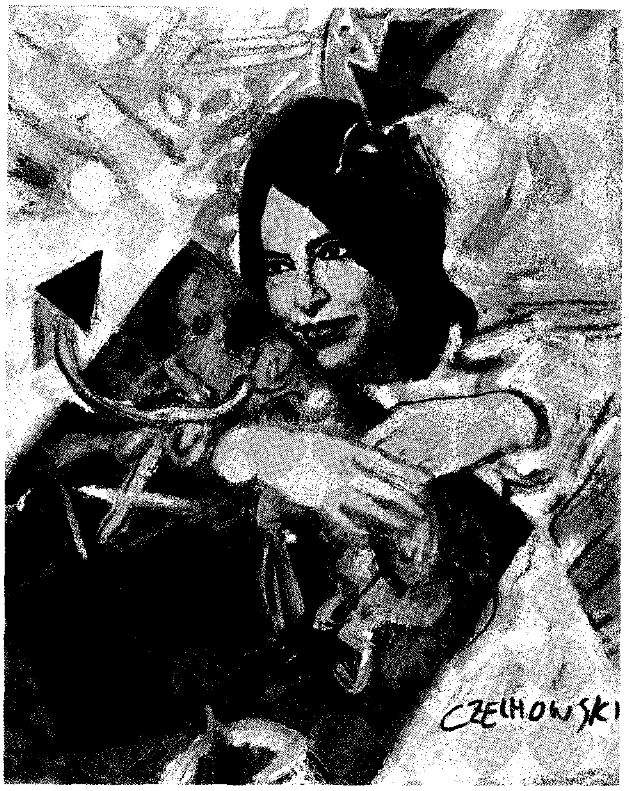
China Institute, 125 E. 65th St.—“Word as Image: The Art of Chinese Seal Engraving” explores the cultural significance of seal engraving and its relationship to calligraphy. On view are seals dating to 476 B.C.; books, paintings, and works of calligraphy with seal impressions; and engravers’ tools. Through Dec. 12. (Open Mondays through Saturdays, 10 to 5, and Thursday evenings until 7.)

Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St.—A new permanent installation of blue-and-white Chinese porcelain, from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth, is on view in the reception hall. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 6; Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—A large show of drawings by Fra Bartolommeo, including studies for “Vision of St. Bernard” and “Madonna della Misericordia.” Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ “Renaissance Florence: Arts and Letters,” drawn from the library’s collection, features letters by Michelangelo and Machiavelli, an early edition of Dante’s “Divine Comedy,” and inflammatory pamphlets by Savonarola. Through Nov. 29. . . . ¶ All sorts of material culled from past Presidential elections (George Washington to Teddy Roosevelt) are on view in “Seeking the ‘Splendid Misery.’ ” Through Nov. 22. . . . ¶ Columbus, sailing back to Spain in 1493, wrote a letter to Ferdinand and Isabella describing his encounter with the islands in the “western sea.” Three of the earliest copies of the letter, printed in Latin, are on view. Through Nov. 1. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—This institution has a knack for identifying new developments in art that “challenge the conventional” in ways that are so subtle that when you do grasp the premises of any of its obscurely titled thematic shows, everything tends to evaporate with the blink of an eye. “The Spatial Drive” is no exception—this institution has once again pinpointed a category that likely doesn’t exist. The best pieces, which are not without their problems, are concerned with transfers of energy and the discrepancies between actions and objects: there’s Gretchen Faust and Kevin Warren’s eighty feet of cardboard tubes for listening and speaking, which stretch from one end of the museum to the other; Marina Abramovic’s crystal meditation beds; and Fred Holland’s gilded heart and braided web of hair. Otherwise, the range is from the “noble” to the downright silly. Through Jan. 3. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—Four hundred years’ worth of prints and photographs portraying Native Americans. Included are works by Timothy O’Sullivan, George Catlin, Edward S. Curtis, and Gertrude Käsebier. Starts Oct. 31. (Third Floor Gallery. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 7:30; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.). . . ¶ In “New Worlds, Ancient Texts,” more than two hundred manuscripts, maps, atlases, globes, books, and prints tell the story of the Old World and the New World—how they came to meet, their courtship, their quarrels, and their inevitable marriage. Through Jan. 9. (Gottesman Hall. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.). . . ¶ Maps and atlases of yesteryear, as “Mapping the New World” demonstrates, were certainly more fanciful than today’s A.A.A. road maps. The show reveals the fertile imagination of European mapmakers, who incorporated palm trees, double-spouted whales, cannibals, and other exotic things into their works. Through Jan. 9. (Edna Barnes Salomon Room. Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.). . . ¶ On view in the Berg Collection are fifty manuscripts, including fragments from “Oliver Twist,” “Tropic of Cancer,” “To the Lighthouse,” and “Ada.” (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)



Eva Hesse

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Marsden Hartley (1877-1943) / **Larry Poons**—This compact show of six paintings made in Berlin in the early teens displays the artist at his best. Hartley travelled to Europe shortly after the legendary Armory Show, which introduced America to Modernism, and it is telling that Berlin held greater meaning for him than the more “modern” Paris. Hartley found his freedom in Germany, and in the process developed a fixation on that country’s soldiers. These carnivalesque paintings were influenced by the light-and-color mysticism of Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky, but they also have a strong, almost musical energy that seems more American. Embedded in them are adumbrations of Stuart Davis, and even a hint of the syncopation of Mondrian’s “Broadway Boogie-woogie.” / A master of the “blip” is gaining steam with his recent all-but-the-kitchen-sink abstraction. Some of these new paintings seem as long as subway cars and are covered with all sorts of paint-splattered crud. The ones with staffs and notes in high relief are strictly kitsch. The self-explanatory “The Balls” is funny. Through Oct. 31. (Salander-O’Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays.)

Ellsworth Kelly—Kelly, a supreme abstractionist, is also one of the best things ever to have happened to the plant kingdom: his botanical sketches are truly exquisite—as piercingly simple, crystalline, and intense as his nonobjective paintings. Through Nov. 28. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. . . . ¶ A show of prints is at Sheehan, 41 E. 57th St., through Oct. 31.)

Wifredo Lam (1902-82)—This Cuban modernist of African, Chinese, and Spanish ancestry was an early multi-culti, the first artist to turn the sometimes condescending primitivism of modern art on its ear. Although this survey of works on paper may fall short of its stated goal—illustrating how Lam showed primitivism to be an invention of modern curators—it is a well-chosen show of works by an accomplished artist whose popularity seems to be on the rise as the economic strength of the Latin world continues to assert itself in art circles. Lam lived in Europe in the twenties and thirties, learning Cubism from Picasso and also befriending the Surrealists, and absorbing the methods of both movements. But, as this exhibition amply demonstrates, Lam used that knowledge to express his own keen sense of human sadness. Through Dec. 20. (Americas Society, 680 Park Ave., at 68th St. Opens daily, except Mondays, at noon.)

Short List—**fernando botero,** Weintraub, 988 Madison Ave., at 77th St. (through Nov. 28); **stephen de staebler,** CDS Gallery, 76 E. 79th St. (through Nov. 21); **john hoyland,** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through Nov. 8); **henri matisse,** La Boetie, 9 E. 82nd St. (through Oct. 31); **jan matulka** and **vaclav vytlacil,** Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St. (through Nov. 14); **fairfield porter,** Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (through Oct. 31); **katherine porter,** Munroe, 9 E. 84th St. (closed Tuesdays, through Nov. 14); **frank stella,** Knoedler, 19 E. 70th St. (through Nov. 12).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

Eva Hesse (1936-70)—The importance of Hesse’s contribution to recent art is just beginning to be appreciated. This fascinating show of paintings from 1960 to 1964 documents the period immediately preceding her first sculptures. It defines her poignant circular search for artistic identity. These are strong, if immature, paintings, and they palpably delineate her struggle to work her way through Modernism—the lyrical post-Cubism of Hofmann, the automatism of Gorky, the stormy surrealism of Pollock. The results often contain hidden, possibly unconscious female imagery and pictorial strategies, such as arrows pointing to fleshy, sexy organs. In works from 1964, tantalizingly, struggle begins to give way to joy. Through Nov. 14. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

“Vote”—None of these works are specifically about voting, but this gathering of politically confrontational art is meant to inspire viewers to go to the polls. Half the show consists of good contemporary work by artists represented by P.P.O.W—including Ilona Granet, Erika Rothenberg, Christy Rupp, and Carrie Mae Weems. More compelling, however, are the works of less recent vintage. Heading that list is Philip Evergood’s 1962 painting “There’ll Be a Change in the Weather,” which heralds the racial integration of schools that followed shortly thereafter. It depicts black and white children in a schoolyard. Things seem friendly enough, except that all the white kids are sticking

ALICIA CZECHOWSKI

out their tongues. Through Nov. 28. (Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St.)

Short List—**vanessa bell,** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through Nov. 7); **isabel bishop** and **robert kushner,** Midtown Payson, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 14); **katherine bowling,** Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 7); **joan brown,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 14); **john hull,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 7); **reuben kadish,** Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 7), and Einstein, 591 Broadway (through Nov. 21); **käthe kollwitz,** Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 7); **jane laudi,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through Nov. 7); **james lechay,** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 7); **louise nevelson,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 28); **jackson pollock,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 28); **sylvia sleigh,** Stiebel, 32 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 14); **george tooker,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. (through Dec. 5); **jack tworkov** and **al held,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Nov. 7).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Jennifer Bartlett—Titled "Air: 24 Hours," this gallery-scale album of hours offers viewers vivid impressions of a day in the life of a *femme extraordinaire sensuelle*. At 2 A.M., we find her having a last cigarette beside the pool in her lower-Manhattan landscaped atrium. At 9 A.M., she's at a fish pond feeding the koi. By four in the afternoon, it's time for matters of the heart. And so on. Bartlett's colors are rich, and her imagistic prowess, if unsubtle, is very gratifying to the senses. Through Oct. 31. (Cooper 155 Wooster St.)

Willie Birch—Birch has lately been making large papier-mâché sculptures that are heavily influenced by African folk statuary. In these newest works, he has broken out of his characteristic blockiness, coming up with pieces that are much more his own. The surfaces are painted with the intense from-the-jar colors of poster paints, and instead of covering the works exclusively with charms and amulets, he is now using words—potent words about race and fear and repression. Through Nov. 7. (Roger, 136 Prince St.)

Francesco Clemente—These spirited watercolors, made in India and Jamaica, are darker, sadder, and more detached than Clemente's work of the late seventies and early eighties, but his phantasmagoric inventiveness has not deserted him: there is no lack of leaping dancers, contortionists, bestraddled phalluses, and leafy landscapes. Through Oct. 31. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

David Dupuis—An uneven show by a potentially interesting young abstract artist. The paintings—paper on canvas with acrylic—are maniacal labyrinths in shallow relief. The successful ones are very likable, if also a little pat. Through Oct. 31. (Rubenstein-Diacono, 130 Prince St.)

Mark Innerst—This popular artist has found some new ways of amusing himself: mimicking a paint-by-number style, incising trees directly into wet paint, and overlaying landscapes with floating numbers and letters. The latter method seems to be a deliberate bid to join the American modernist tradition of the errant Charles Demuth. Usually, Innerst's figures are merely compositional elements, but in a few works they seem to spell "vision," something that most of his paintings, for all their cleverness and skill, tend to lack. Still, there are some gorgeous passages, which distract the viewer from the basic vanity of Innerst's enterprise. Through Oct. 31. (Marcus, 578 Broadway.)

Hirsch Perlman—There is a bit of the grift to this appealing and funny series of drawings, which forms a kind of manual on the gentle art of asking people questions that they don't want to answer—the journalist's stock-in-trade. No. 14, the "Nonsense Technique," requires the interrogator to ask questions that make no sense. "This can become so nerve-wracking," the drawing states, "that it will be a great relief to answer questions that can be understood." Through Nov. 14. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

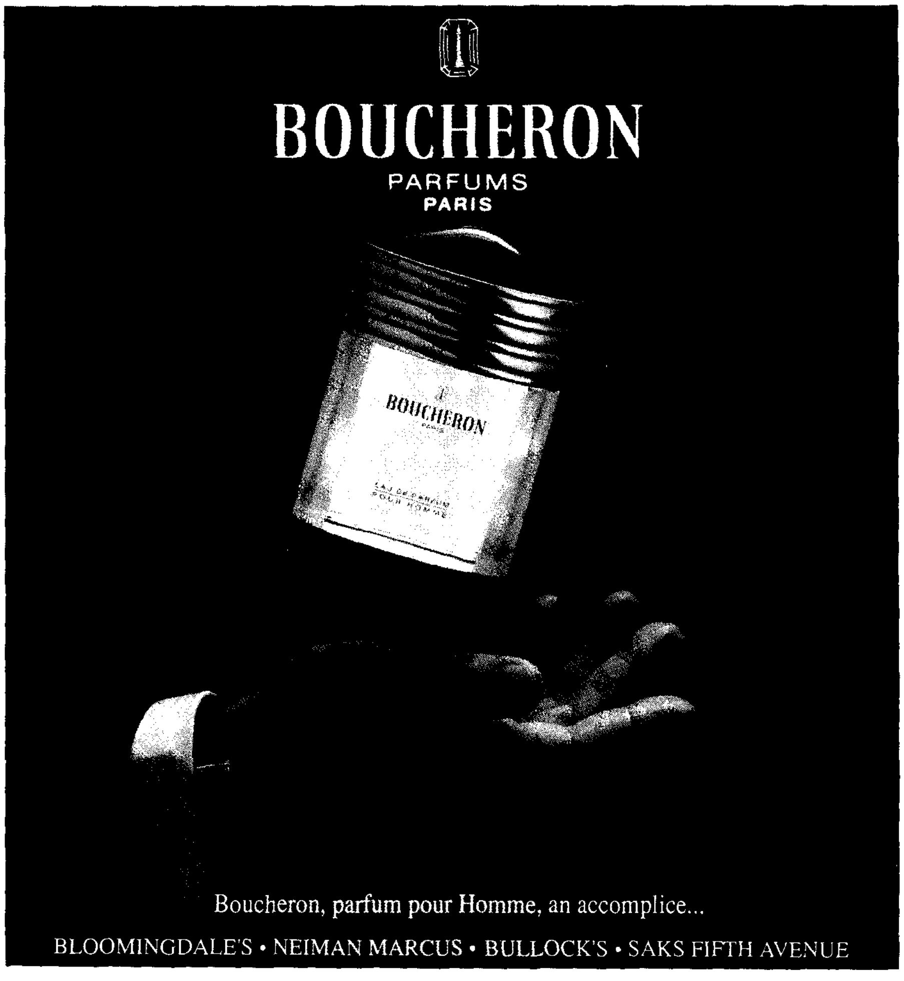
Jim Shaw—This artist has some very inventive ways of addressing a fairly popular contemporary theme: the dissolution of self. This is done in a series of computer-manipulated photographic self-portraits in which the artist's face seems to have been shattered into crystalline pieces, and in a massive grid of paintings of the facial parts of four friends, blown up and randomly rearranged. The latter work is uncharacteristically austere, but a piece close by has some of the insanity of a homespun Lucas Samaras. It consists of a cardboard-and-wood log cabin whose ceiling, walls, and floor are covered in a grid of color photographs of the artist's face contorted into hundreds of different expressions. It's an endless attempt to capture and transmit lost moods. Through Nov. 7. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Robert Williams—In these cartoon paintings, the prolific Williams creates endlessly inventive, jam-packed struggles of the freaky, funky kind. Strangely enough, though, his paintings are technically dry, and they don't hold together very well when compared to the antics of, say, Chicago's Hairy Who. Through Nov. 21. (Cutler, 379 West Broadway.)

"Rewards of Labor—The W.P.A. Spirit"—The emphasis here is on diligent drawings and prints of an America struggling out of the Great Depression—workers, factories, and urban construction. There are also some charming sculptures, including gregarious, decorative figural groups by Anita Weschler, as well as studies for José Maria Sert's heroic murals at Rockefeller Center. But the spirit is perhaps best expressed in a mural by Abraham Joel Tobias, titled "The Triumph of Science Over Charlatanism." It combines the figurative W.P.A. style with mystical modernist abstraction, in an allegory that is charming in its confused hokiness. Through Oct. 31. (Berman-Daferner, 568 Broadway.)

Group Show—Alfred Leslie's "Four Panel Green," from 1957, was one of the artist's last AbEx paintings, and it marks the beginning of his break with modernist style. It is grand and impressive—sort of like Al Held meets Franz Kline—with a strong blush of the heroic, which the artist deliberately disrupts by fracturing the surface into four separate parts. Also on view are a fine sculpture and drawing by David Rabinowitch; a 1972 painting by Harriet Korman, which moves away from minimalist perfection in a lyrical manner; and a curious unfinished painting by Myron Stout. Through Nov. 28. (Flynn, 113 Crosby St.)

Short List—**massimo antonaci** and **sol lewitt,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through Nov. 21); **tony berlant,** Louver, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 14); **power boothe,** Morrison, 59 Thompson St. (through Nov. 21); **robert bordo,** Brooke Alexander, 59 Wooster St. (through Nov. 14); **chuck connelly,** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway (through Nov. 14); **wim delvoye,** Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway (through Nov. 7); **jessica diamond,** American Fine Arts, 40 Wooster St. (through Oct. 31); **nancy dwyer,** Baer, 476 Broome St. (through Nov. 28); **christian eckart,** RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (through Nov. 18); **stephen ellis,** Koury, 89 Greene St. (through Nov. 14); **lawrence gipe,** Blum Helman Warehouse, 80 Greene St. (through Nov. 21); **april gornik,** Thorp, 103 Prince St. (through Nov. 14); **duane hanson,** Helander, 415 West Broadway (through Nov. 2); **candida höfer,** Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. (through Oct. 31); **felix stephan huber,** Good, 532 Broadway (through Nov. 7); **simon leung** and **andrea zittel,** Rosen, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 28); **loren munk,** Zarre, 154 Wooster St. (through Nov. 7); **joel otterson,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. (through Nov. 7); **a. r. penck,** Nolan, 560 Broadway (through Nov. 21);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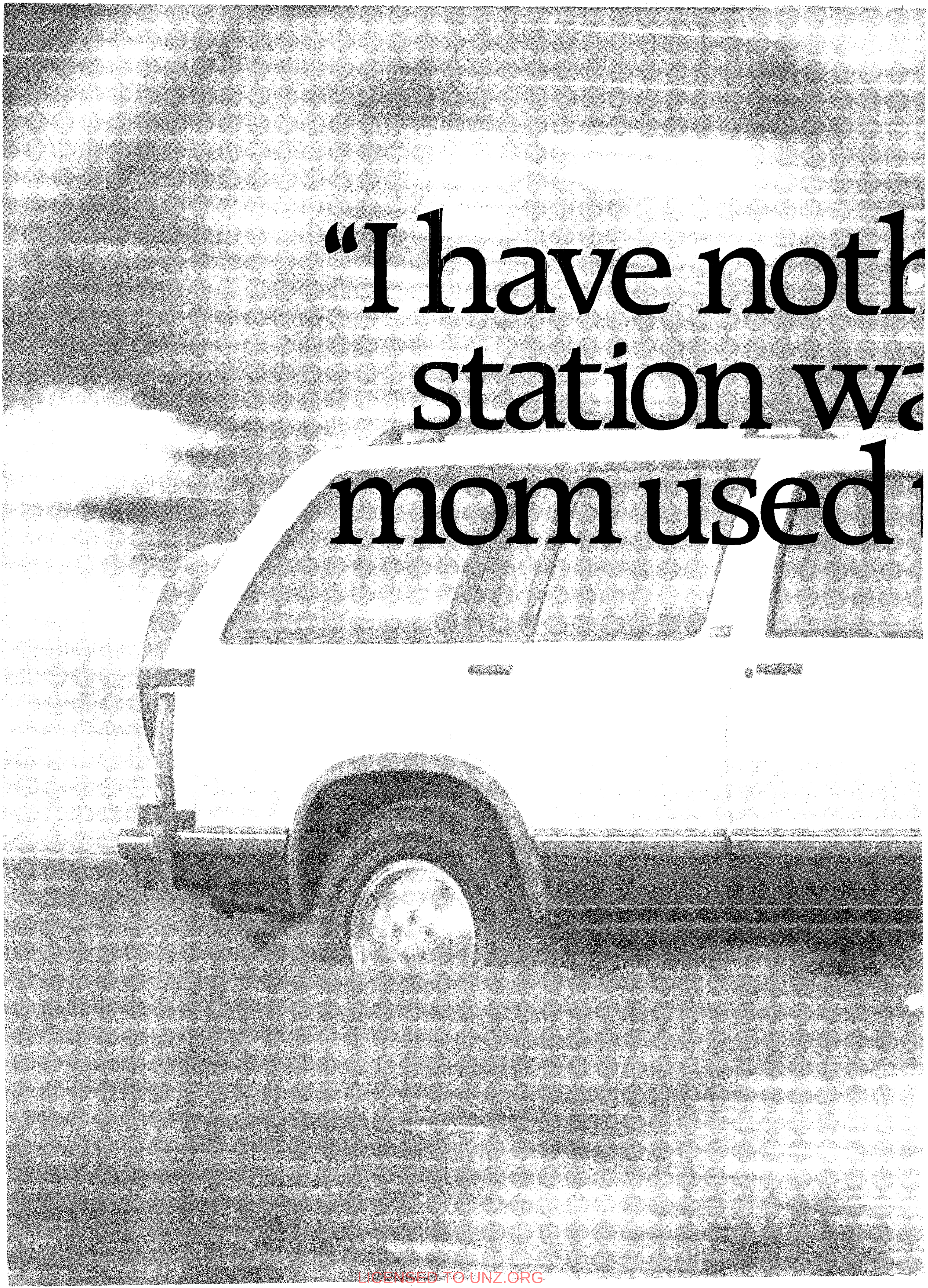
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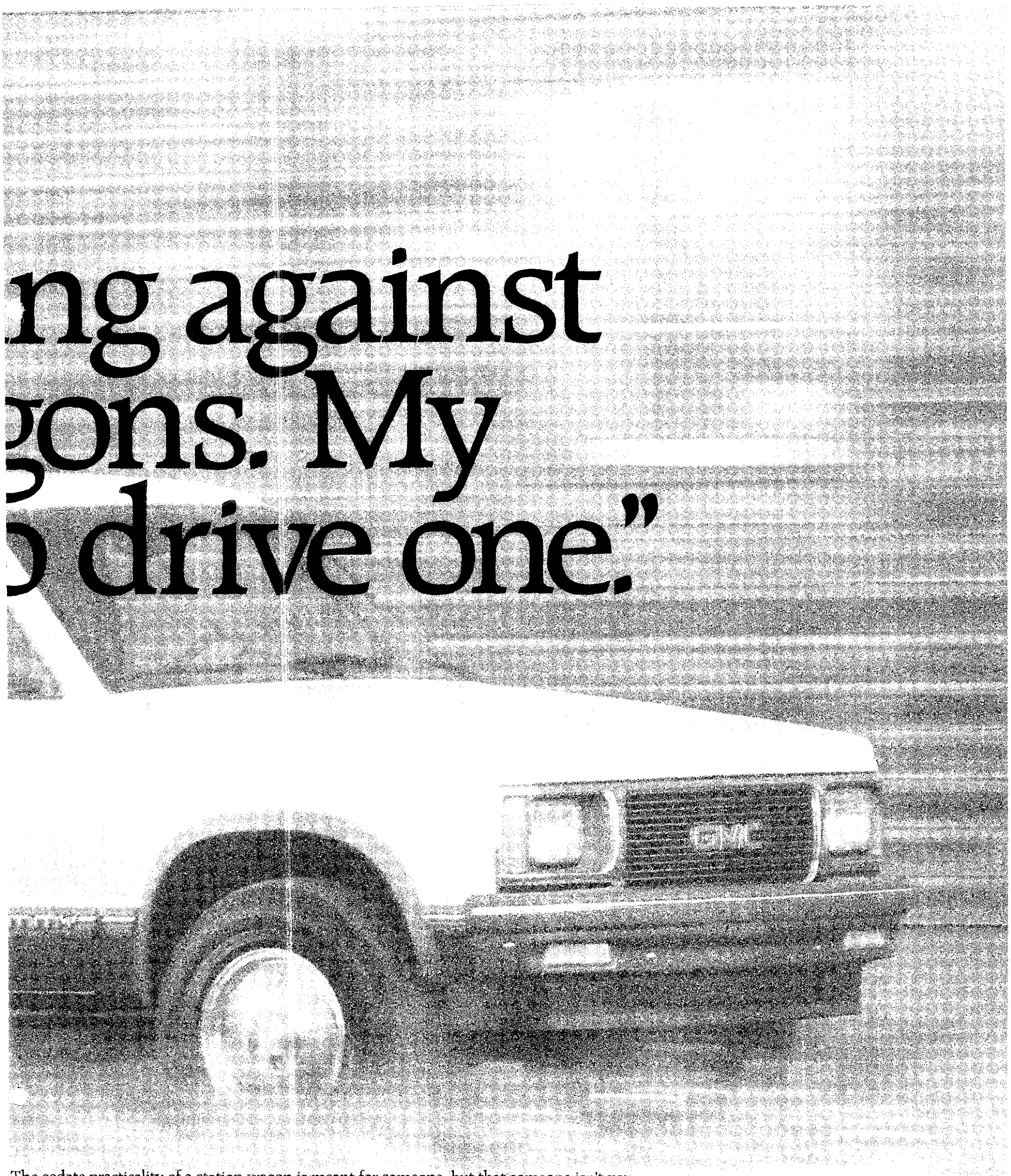

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DAVID REED (through Nov. 28) and **ALDO ROSSI** (through Dec. 12), Protetch, 560 Broadway; **JOAN SNYDER,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 420 West Broadway *(through Oct. 31);* **BUZZ SPECTOR,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Nov. 14); **MICHELLE STUART,** Fawbush, 76 Grand St. (through Nov. 14); **LAUREN SZOLD,** 303 Gallery, 89 Greene St. (through Nov. 14); **THOMAS TROSCH,** Fiction-Nonfiction, 21 Mercer St. (through Oct. 31); **CHRISTOPHER WOOL,** Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St. (through Nov. 14).

PHOTOGRAPHY

Marriage of Minds

"THEY were as mutually dependent as a couple of trapeze artists": that's how the biographer Philippe Julian described Baron Adolph de Meyer and his wife, Olga, who had a remarkably modern, open relationship. In a new book, "Of Passions and Tenderness" (Graystone), one can sense the extraordinary collaboration and soul-joining that went on between these worldly turn-of-the-century people. The book is made up of photographs de Meyer took of Olga between the eighteen-nineties and the nineteen-thirties. The photographs had been stored for decades in a family trunk, where they were discovered by a dealer who'd bought the object at an auction. De Meyer's role in the history of fashion and society photography is well established, but until now his skill as a portraitist hadn't really been recognized. The photographs in this book—along with a moving homage to Olga, written in 1944, and several excerpts from de Meyer's letters—are the equivalent of an essay on attachment.

Sandy Skoglund—The three pieces here are typical Skoglund: photographs with complementary installations that involve an over-the-top combination of sculpture, mannequins, and glued-on elements. The results are both spooky and hilarious. The main ingredients in the three works are smoked bacon strips, Cheez Doodles, and raisins. In each work, the interplay between the photos, which depict real people, and the environments, which employ the mannequins, is what gives Skoglund's art its decorator-gone-haywire touch. Through Oct. 31. (Borden, 560 Broadway.)

Short List—**NANCY CRAMPTON,** La Maison Française, New York University, 16 Washington Mews (through Oct. 31); **LYNN DAVIS,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 420 West Broadway (through Oct. 31); **JOHN DIVOLA,** Baum, 588 Broadway (through Nov. 28); **MITCH EPSTEIN,** Tenri, 575 Broadway (through Nov. 7); **YOUSUF KARSH** and **ERNST HAAS,** International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; both shows through Jan. 24); **DUANE MICHALS** and **LOIS GREENFIELD,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8; both shows through Nov. 8); **NICHOLAS NIXON,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Dec. 5); **IZHAR PATKIN** and **NAM JUNE PAIK,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Nov. 21); **AARON SISKIND,** Mann, 42 E. 76th St. (through Nov. 21); **PHILIP TRAGER,** Saul, 155 Spring St. (through Nov. 14).

MUSIC

Let It Be

A FRESH dispatch from the Unity of Music front: the New York Festival of Song, a lively group whose mostly downtown programs have lately found a foothold at Lincoln Center's Walter Reade Theatre, is devoting its first uptown program this year not to Schubert and Goethe but to Lennon and McCartney. The performing forces are a pair of singers (Marsha Hunter and Brian Kent), the pianist Steven Blier (a co-director of NYFOS), and Mark Stewart on cello and guitar; the program is titled "Ticket to Ride." NYFOS evidently believes that Beatles' songs have a musical substance that can survive transfer from one format to another, and that their substance is worth examining in the quieter atmosphere of the song recital.

They won't get any arguments here: the vitality of a tradition is demonstrated by its capacity to assimilate new influences. At the same time, the value of masterworks is proved by their capacity for conveying meaning beyond the context of—or after the disappearance of—the traditions from which they arose. So the art-song recital and Lennon and McCartney may have a lot to say to each other from now on.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**SEMIRAMIDE,** by Rossini, with Christine Weidinger, Gloria Scalchi, Frank Lopardo, and Barseg Tumanyan; conducted by Ion Marin. (Oct. 26 and Oct. 30 at 7:30.). . . **TOSCA,** with Ghena Dimitrova, Luciano Pavarotti, and Alain Fondary; Christian Badea. (Oct. 27 and Nov. 4 at 8, and Oct. 31 at 1.). . . **THE VOYAGE,** a Columbus-inspired operatic epic by Philip Glass, with a cast that includes Patricia Schuman, Tatiana Troyanos, and Timothy Noble; Bruce Ferden. (Oct. 28 at 8 and Oct. 31 at 8:30.). . . **MADAMA BUTTERFLY,** with Yoko Watanabe, Wendy White, Michael Sylvester, and Juan Pons; Julius Rudel. (Oct. 29 at 8.). . . With Diana Soviero in the title role. (Nov. 3 at 8.). . . **L'ELISIR D'AMORE,** with Ruth Ann Swenson, Stanford Olsen, Gino Quilico, and Enzo Dara; Edoardo Müller. (Nov. 2 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

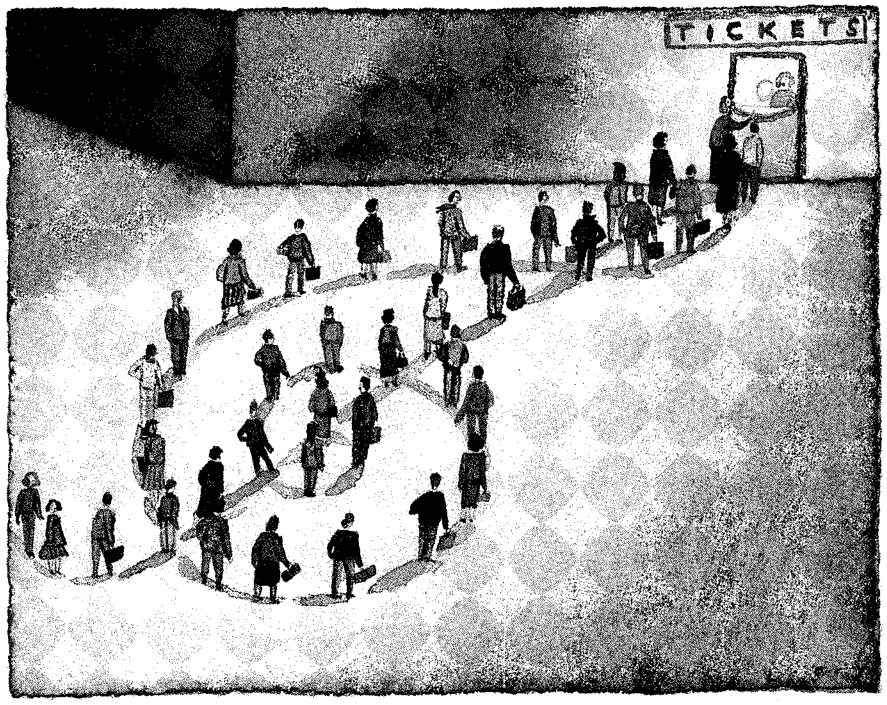
New York City Opera—**THE MAGIC FLUTE,** sung in English, with Elizabeth Futral, Linda Louise Kelley, Paul Austin Kelly, Matthew Lau, and John Calvin West; conducted by Scott Bergeson. (Oct. 27 at 8 and Oct. 31 at 1:30.). . . **DIE FLEDERMAUS,** sung in English, with Cynthia Lawrence, Cecelia Wasson, Robert Brubaker, and Robert Orth; Mark Gibson. (Oct. 29 at 8.). . . With Pamela South, Susan Wallin, Richard Drews, and Louis Otey; Mark Gibson. (Nov. 1 at 1:30 and Nov. 3 at 8.). . . **CARMEN,** with Susanne Marsee, Eva Zseller, John Duykers, and Edward Huls; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 30 and Nov. 4 at 8.). . . With Robynne Redmon, Christiane Riel, Antonio Barasorda, and Harry Dworchak; Guido Ajmone-Marsan. (Oct. 31 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

Soirée Poulenc/Cocteau—Soprano Marion Sylvestre performs two staged dramatic works by Poulenc to texts by Cocteau: the tragic monodrama "La Voix Humaine" (in which a jilted lover acknowledges the end of the affair, over the phone) and "La Dame de Monte-Carlo" (Poulenc's last substantial vocal work, a monologue recounting an aging glamour girl's evaporating hopes of restoring her lost fortune); with pianist Pierre Vallet. (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Oct. 30-31 at 8.)

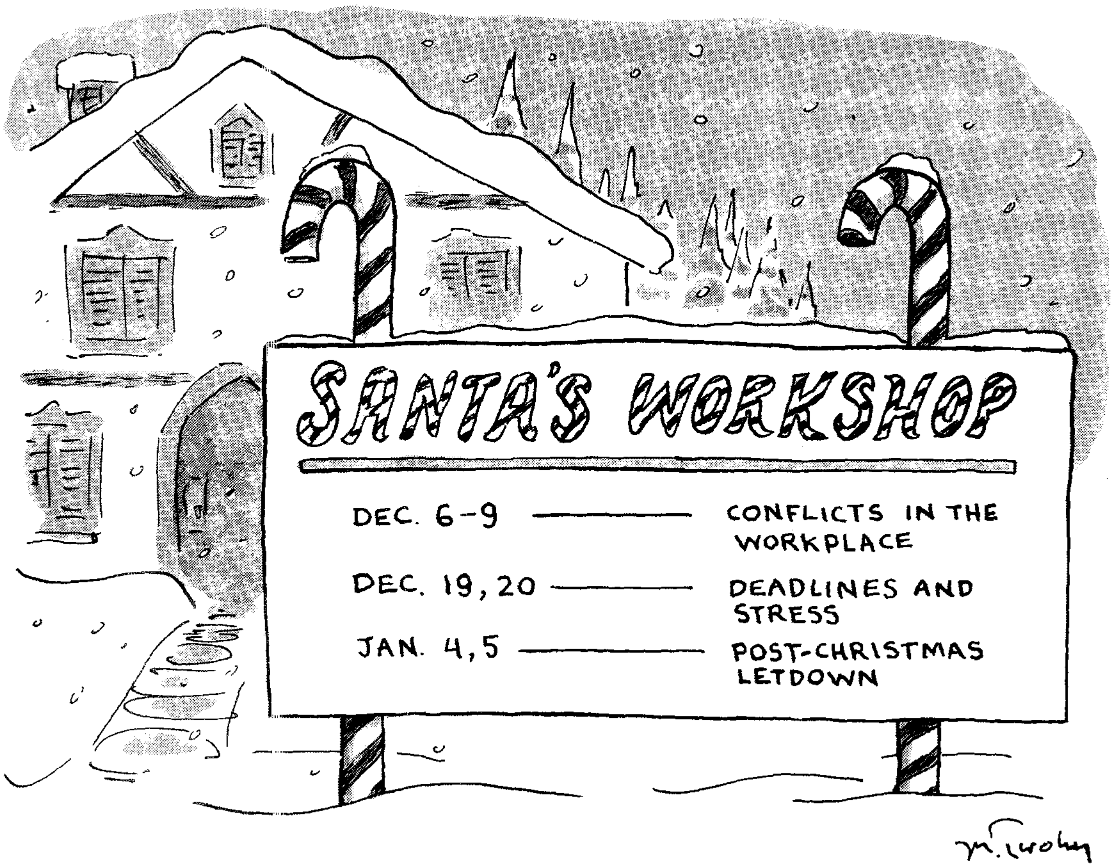
Amato Opera Theatre—Presenting "Faust," a pretty good choice for Halloween. (Amato Opera House, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Oct. 31 at 7:30 and Nov. 1 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 27 at 7:30: Kurt Masur conducts Beethoven's Symphony No. 7 and incidental music to "Egmont" (with soprano Sylvia McNair and narrator Nico Castel). . . . ¶ Oct. 29-31 at 8 and Nov. 3 at 7:30: Klaus Tennstedt conducts Mahler's Sixth Symphony.



LONNI SUE JOHNSON


SANTA'S WORKSHOP
DEC. 6-9 —— CONFLICTS IN THE WORKPLACE
DEC. 19, 20 —— DEADLINES AND STRESS
JAN. 4, 5 —— POST-CHRISTMAS LETDOWN
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MUSIC–Cont'd

Saint Thomas Choir—Gerre Hancock directs an all-Britten concert; with the Orchestra of St. Luke's. (St. Thomas Church, Fifth Ave. at 53rd St. 757-7013, ext. 303. Oct. 27 at 7:30.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Roger Norrington conducts Beethoven's "Leonore" Overture No. 3, Symphony No. 5, and Violin Concerto (with Thomas Zehetmair). (Avery Fisher Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.)

New York Bach Ensemble—Kent Tritle leads the period-instrument players in Bach's Cantatas No. 56 and No. 210, as well as in a Handel organ concerto. (Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, Park Ave. at 84th St. 439-8044. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Clarion Concerts—Newell Jenkins directs music by Monteverdi and his contemporaries, with soprano Julianne Baird and tenor Steven Tharp among the soloists. (Merkin Concert Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.)

S.E.M. Ensemble—Petr Kotik conducts a full-orchestra realization of John Cage's "Atlas Eclipticalis," in which the eighty-six instrumentalists will play from scores inspired by astronomical maps. As at its première, in 1961, the piece will be performed simultaneously with the composer's "Winter Music" (for from one to twenty pianists), here limited to the solo pianism of David Tudor. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 29 at 8.)

Amor Artis Chamber Choir and Orchestra—Johannes Somary directs Handel's oratorio "Susanna." (St. Jean Baptiste Church, Lexington Ave. at 76th St. Oct. 31 at 8. For information about tickets, call 874-4513.)

New World Symphony—Michael Tilson Thomas conducts Ginastera's "Dances from 'Estancia,'" Ives' Fourth Symphony, and Gershwin's Second Rhapsody (in which he will double as piano soloist). (Avery Fisher Hall. Nov. 1 at 3.)

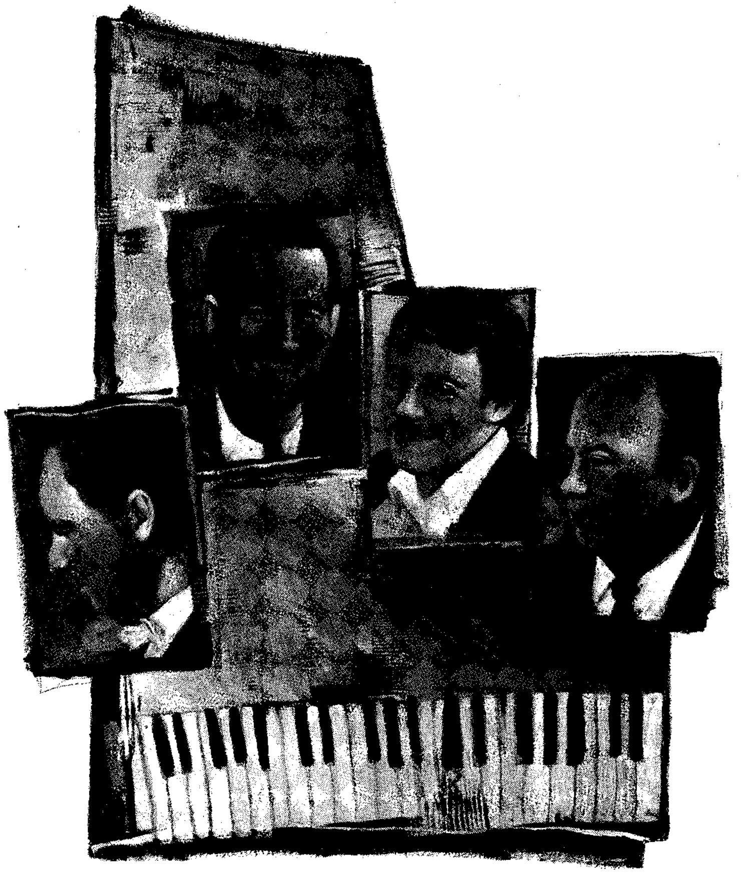
Requiems, for All Saints' Day—Nov. 1 at 4: David Shuler directs Tomás Luís de Victoria's Requiem (its composer's darkly Theotokópoulonian swan song). (Church of St. Luke in the Fields, 487 Hudson St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 5: David Weadon directs Brahms' "Ein Deutsches Requiem." (Brick Presbyterian Church, Park Ave. at 91st St. No tickets necessary.). . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 7: Bruce Fifer directs Fauré's Requiem. (Cathedral of St. John the Divine, Amsterdam Ave. at 112th St. No tickets necessary.)

Ascension Music Chorus and Orchestra—Dennis Keene directs Bach's B-Minor Mass. (Church of the Ascension, Fifth Ave. at 10th St. 254-8553. Nov. 2 at 8.)

Canterbury Choral Society—Charles Dodsley Walker directs Mahler's Symphony No. 8 (the "Symphony of a Thousand," with the forces here limited to a mere five hundred singers, plus a full symphony orchestra). (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 3 at 8.)

RECITALS

International Harpsichord Festival—At Merkin Concert Hall, through Nov. 7. The eminent Canadian harpsichordist Kenneth Gilbert and three of his students (from France, England, and the United States) present a series of concerts for those who agree with François Couperin, one of the instrument's eminent early practitioners, that "the harpsichord is perfect as to its compass, and brilliant in itself." Oct. 26 at 8: Mr. Gilbert, who (curiously) has not previously performed in New York, performs Bach's D-Major Partita, the eighth *ordre* (in B-Minor) from Couperin's "Second Livre," keyboard arrangements by Claude-Bénigne Balbastre of movements from Rameau's opera "Pygmalion," and the D-Major Suite from the 1689 "Pièces de Clavecin" by Louis XIV's cross-eyed court harpsichordist, Jean-Henri D'Anglebert. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 8: The French harpsichordist Olivier Baumont plays five Scarlatti sonatas, Handel's E-Major Suite (the one known to generations of aspiring keyboardists for its "Harmonious Blacksmith" variations), Rameau's E-Major "Pièces de Clavecin," and the twenty-fifth *ordre* from Couperin's "Quatrième Livre" (a volume elegantly addressed by Mr. Baumont in a brand-new Erato recording). . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 8: New York's own Andrew Appel leads his Four Nations Ensemble in music by J. S. Bach and three of his musical sons, with unaccompanied Bach movements serving as preludes to the principal pieces. . . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 8: The English harpsichordist Davitt Moroney performs Bach's French Suite No. 4 and movements from "The Art of Fugue," in addition to a D-minor suite by Louis Couperin (François's uncle) and virginal music by Byrd.



Olivier Baumont, Andrew Appel, Davitt Moroney, and Kenneth Gilbert at the International Harpsichord Festival

TIM BOWER

Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center—Chamber works and small-scale concertos by Bach, Mendelssohn, and Prokofiev. (Alice Tully Hall. Oct. 27 at 7:30.)

Tokyo String Quartet—Oct. 27-28 at 8: Performing Haydn's String Quartet in B-Flat (Op. 76, No. 4), Ezra Laderman's Piano Quintet (with the help of Ilana Vered), and Schubert's C-Major String Quintet (with cellist Sharon Robinson assisting). (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.). . . ¶ Nov. 4 at 8: Schubert's A-Minor String Quartet, Berg's String Quartet, and Mozart's Clarinet Quintet (with Richard Stoltzman). (Alice Tully Hall.)

Eugen Indjic—Pianist, performing Schumann's "Davidsbündlertänze," Prokofiev's Second Sonata, and various works, including four mazurkas, by Chopin. (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Da Capo Chamber Players—Performing Brahms' A-Major Trio; Debussy's Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp; and works by Nicholas Maw (including his "Ghost Dances"). (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Vocal Chamber Music—Soprano Ruth Golden, hornist Michael Thompson, and pianist David Owen Norris present chamber works and "obbligato lieder" by Schubert, Franz Lachner, Berlioz, and others. (National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St. 369-4880. Oct. 29 at 6:30.)

Bargemusic—All aboard for Beethoven: a violin sonata and two piano trios (one being the "Archduke"). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Oct. 29 at 7:30 and Nov. 1 at 4.)

Earl Wild—The pianist performs works by Chopin (his Op. 25 Études and B-Minor Scherzo) and Rachmaninoff (including the Second Sonata and Variations on a Theme by Corelli). (Carnegie Hall. Oct. 30 at 8.)

Anner Bylsma—The cellist plays Bach's Suites No. 2, No. 4, and No. 5. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Oct. 30 at 8.)

Andrew Bolotowsky—The flutist, who has a knack for dusting off bits of repertoire that nobody else seems to have heard of, will play transcriptions from familiar operas (including an arrangement from Verdi's "Rigoletto" by its publisher, Giulio Ricordi); with violinist Gabriela Klassen. (Theodore Roosevelt Birthplace, 28 E. 20th St. Oct. 31 at 2. No charge beyond admission to the museum. . . . ¶ Bargemusic, Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Nov. 4 at 7:30. Admission by contribution.)

The Music Project—Chamber music by Beethoven, Poulenc, Pierné, and Wallingford Riegger. (Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 1 at 2.)

John Cage Celebration—Five hours of whatever shall be, including the first American screening of the composer's film "One^{11} and 103," completed this summer; with the many notable performers including pianists David Tudor, Margaret Leng Tan, Grete Sultan, and Steven Drury; musical generalists Laurie Anderson and Yoko Ono; and such ensembles as Continuum, the New Music Consort, Essential Music, and the Cunningham Musicians. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Nov. 1 at 3.)

New York Chamber Ensemble—Stephen Rogers Radcliffe conducts Brahms' D-Major Serenade, Griffes's "Tone Pictures," and Berlioz' "Les Nuits d'Été" (featuring mezzo-soprano Meredith Parsons). (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. Nov. 1 at 5. For information about tickets, call 870-2439.)

"Music and More"—Pianists Israela Margalit and Seymour Lipkin, plus colleagues, play and discuss all sorts of pieces. (Merkin Concert Hall. Nov. 1 at 3.)

New York Festival of Song—Performing songs by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. (Walter Reade Theatre, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. Nov. 2 at 7:30. For information about tickets, call 875-5050.)

Horacio Gutiérrez—The pianist offers Haydn's Sonata No. 50 in C Major, Schumann's "Davidsbündlertänze," and Liszt's B-Minor Sonata. (Carnegie Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

KT Sullivan—No stranger to the finer cabaret rooms in town, Ms. Sullivan here turns her attention to songs by Howard Dietz and Arthur Schwartz. Schwartz published his first song—"Baltimore, M.D., You're the Only Doctor for Me"—in 1923, as a mere lad in law school. Fortunately, he hooked up with lyricist Dietz six years later, and posterity was rewarded with such classics as "Dancing in the Dark" and "You and the Night and the Music." (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Oct. 28 at 8.)

Ned's Atomic Dustbin—This self-described "popcore" band from the Midlands region of England has had a big alternative-music hit with their début album, "God Fodder," but they outdo themselves in their live shows. With speed-fuzz guitar and two bass guitars blasting away, these high-energy marvels are a maniacal good time. (Continental Club, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 307-7171. Oct. 28 at 9:30.)

Catherine Wheel—As a leading example of the kind of British rock band known as "shoegazers" (for staring at their feet, trancewise, while playing), Catherine Wheel has already been lionized, pegged, and dismissed by the English pop press. We slow-moving colonials can take our time and enjoy a very fine new band. They play slow, floating melodies that put you in a tranquil mood, and then they come crashing down with a brutal, deafening industrial groove that is all jagged edges and metallic crunch. With House of Love and Ocean Colour Scene, two other British imports; all three bands share the same record label, Fontana. (Academy Theatre, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Oct. 30 at 8.)

Carter the Unstoppable Sex Machine—Techno-sarcasm and sugarcoated bile from the guitar-playing London duo who call themselves Fruit Bat and Jim Bob and who play to the accompaniment of throbbing prerecorded tapes. Enormously popular in England, but a bit twee for superstardom here, the boys in Carter U.S.M. are this moment's masters of peppy moping. With the 25th of May and the 360's. (Academy Theatre. Oct. 29 at 8.)

Erasure—Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Oct. 27-28, Oct. 30-Nov. 1, and Nov. 3, all at 8. Through Nov. 7.

Mudhoney—With Eugenius, Laughing Hyenas, and the Celibate Rifles. (Roseland, 239 W. 52nd St. 307-7171. Oct. 29 at 8.)

Blues Traveler—With several other bands. (Roseland. Oct. 31 at 8.)

Duke Ellington Society—Presenting Milt Hinton, John Bunch, and Bucky Pizzarelli. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. Nov. 1 at 7:30. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

A. Leroy—Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Nov. 2 at 8.

Ronny Whyte Trio—Weill Recital Hall. Nov. 4 at 8.

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Giants—Vs. the Seattle Seahawks, Oct. 25 at 1.

Jets—Vs. the Buffalo Bills, Oct. 26 at 9. . . . ¶ Vs. the Miami Dolphins, Nov. 1 at 1.

Rangers—Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Oct. 26. . . . ¶ Vs. the Quebec Nordiques, Oct. 29. . . . ¶ Vs. the Buffalo Sabres, Nov. 2. . . . ¶ Vs. the Philadelphia Flyers, Nov. 4. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the Los Angeles Kings, Oct. 27. . . . ¶ Vs. the Devils, Oct. 31. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Vs. the Islanders, Oct. 30 at 7:35.

(The Giants and the Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. For Giants tickets, call 1-201 935-8111; for Jets tickets, call 1-516 538-6600. The Rangers play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Islanders at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 794-9300; and the Devils at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except Oct. 27 and Nov. 4, at 12:30. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8 and Tuesdays at 1; Sundays at 6:45.

Humans—The New York City Marathon is Nov. 1, and nearly twenty-five thousand runners have signed up. It starts at 10:45, at the toll plaza of the Verrazano Bridge, and ends—for some—more than two hours later, near Tavern on the Green, in Central Park.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Halloween—So maybe there are fewer opportunities for door-to-door treats, but New York City offers more than enough to make up for stale candy corn and bruised apples:

. . . **talk, walk, & hawk**—Janetta Rebol Benton will talk about medieval gargoyles and monsters, at the Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St., on Oct. 29 at 11 A.M. For tickets, call 570-3949. . . . ¶ Brooklyn's Prospect Park has a Haunted Walk and Halloween Festival on Oct. 31, from noon to 3. For more information, call 1-718 965-8961, Monday through Friday. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 2: Spy on hawks from the terrace of the Prospect Park boathouse. For more information, call 1-718 287-3400.

. . . **Dr. Caligari, the Phantom, & other ghouls**—Head up to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine on Oct. 30, at 7 or 11, for the scariest silent movie going, "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari," with organ music provided by Lee Irwin. Both screenings will be followed by the Great Procession of Ghouls. Tickets available at the door. . . . ¶ Another spooky silent, "The Phantom of the Opera" (the 1925 version, with Lon Chaney), with Marsha Long at the organ, will be shown on Oct. 31 at 9, at St. Paul's Chapel, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Tickets available at the door.

. . . **eats: fire, pumpkins, stone soup, & macho munchies**—"Carnevale of Souls," on Oct. 30 at 9, will feature fire-eaters, costumes, and body painting. Sponsored by Dynamic Theatre Company and the Drama Club, the revelry will take place at 44 Walker St. Tickets available the night of the performance. . . . ¶ South Street Seaport's annual Harvest Festival, on Oct. 31 from noon to 4 and Nov. 1 from 1 to 4. For more information, call 732-7678. . . . ¶ Breeze on down to the Pumpkin Sail Festival's grand finale on Pier 45; on Oct. 31 from noon to 5, there will be live music, "stone soup," and crafts. For more information, call 1-914 454-7673, Monday through Friday. . . . ¶ Ingest artistic baked goods to be made and sold by men, most of them artists. Proceeds will benefit two women's-rights groups. On Oct. 31 from 2 to 6, at the Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St.

. . . **the ball**—The annual costume ball at the Theatre for the New City. Doors open at 7. (155 First Ave., at 10th St. For more information, call 254-1109.)

. . . **the parade**—Let's face it, the annual Greenwich Village parade makes the other annual parades look like Main Street affairs. The spectacle starts at 7 on Oct. 31; strutters should arrive at 6, at the corner of Sixth Ave. and Spring St. There's a new route this year: north up Sixth Ave. from Spring St. to Houston St., east on Houston to Lafayette St., north on Lafayette to Union Sq.

Words—Oct. 28 at 8: Seven poets, including Allen Ginsberg and Anne Waldman, will read from a new anthology of Buddhism-influenced poetry. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. No tickets necessary.)

Rodeo—"The World's Toughest Rodeo" yeehaws into Madison Square Garden on Oct. 30 at 7:30 and Oct. 31 at 1:30 and 7:30. (For information about tickets, call 465-6741.)

Vote—Pull the levers for your candidates, on Nov. 3, from 6 A.M. to 9 P.M.

Buzzwords

Smooth Macallan

Exhaustive research, recently undertaken, suggested to the Directors of The Macallan that 'smooth' and 'mature' might well be *buzzwords* to be aptly used in any future advertising for our succulent malt whisky.

Ever anxious to explore the latest 'trends', our Publicity Advisers have *buckled to.*

If such innovation can prompt you to a little in-depth research of your own – a dabble, for instance, in the luscious golden profundities of The Macallan itself – our flirtation with modernism will not have been in vain.

Mature Macallan

THE MACALLAN.
THE SINGLE MALT SCOTCH.

Sole U.S.A. Distributor, Remy Amerique, Inc., NY, NY
Scotch Whisky 86 Proof, 43% Alc./Vol © 1991

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN "MOVIES IN BRIEF," STARTING ON PAGE 30.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Enchanted April" (†).
Theatre 2: "Light Sleeper" (directed by Paul Schrader), with Willem Dafoe and Susan Sarandon.
Theatre 3: "Night on Earth" (Jim Jarmusch).
Theatre 4: Through Oct. 29: "Delicatessen" (Jean-Pierre Jeunet and Marc Caro, in French). From Oct. 30: "My New Gun" (†).
Theatre 5: "Simple Men" (Hal Hartley), with Robert Burke and William Sage.
Theatre 6: "In the Soup" (Alexandre Rockwell), with Seymour Cassel, Steve Buscemi, Jennifer Beals, Will Patton, Stanley Tucci, and Pat Moya.

Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
Oct. 26: Theatre closed.
Oct. 27: (Separate admissions) "Speaking Parts" (1989, Atom Egoyan); "Poison" (1991, Todd Haynes); and "American Fabulous" (Reno Dakota), a documentary on Jeffrey Strouth.
Oct. 28: (Separate admissions) "The Unbelievable Truth" (1989, Hal Hartley), with Robert Burke, Adrienne Shelly, and Christopher Cooke; and "American Fabulous."
Oct. 29: (Separate admissions) "True Love" (1989, Nancy Savoca), with Annabella Sciorra and Ron Eldard; and "American Fabulous."
Oct. 30: (Separate admissions) "Slacker" (1991, Richard Linklater); and "American Fabulous."
Oct. 31: (Separate admissions) "Slacker"; "Daughters of the Dust" (1991, Julie Dash); "The Hours and Times" (1992, Christopher Münch), with Ian Hart and David Angus; and "American Fabulous."
Nov. 1: (Separate admissions) "Dogfight" (1991, Nancy Savoca), with River Phoenix and Lili Taylor; "Metropolitan" (1990, Whit Stillman), with Edward Clements, Carolyn Farina, Christopher Eigeman, and Taylor Nichols; "The Hours and Times"; and "American Fabulous."
Nov. 2: Theatre closed.
Nov. 3: (Separate admissions) "Metropolitan" and "American Fabulous."
Nov. 4: (Separate admissions) "Dogfight" and "American Fabulous."

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Candyman" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 3: "Husbands and Wives" (†).

Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Hero" (†).
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 3: "Blade Runner" (1982, Ridley Scott), with Harrison Ford.
Theatre 4: "A River Runs Through It" (†).
Theatre 5: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey.
Theatre 6: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).
Theatre 7: "Singles" (†).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Mighty Ducks" (Stephen Herek), with Emilio Estevez, Joss Ackland, and Lane Smith.
Theatre 2: "Zebrahead" (†).
Theatre 3: "Gas Food Lodging" (Allison Anders), with Brooke Adams, Ione Skye, and Fairuza Balk.
Theatre 4: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 5: "1492: Conquest of Paradise" (†).
Theatre 6: "Sarafina!" (Darrell James Roodt), with Whoopi Goldberg.
Theatre 7: "The Panama Deception" (Barbara Trent), a documentary.

19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "Husbands and Wives" (†).
Theatre 2: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 3: "Pure Country" (Christopher Cain), with George Strait, Lesley Ann Warren, and Isabel Glasser.
Theatre 4: "Zebrahead" (†).
Theatre 5: "1492: Conquest of Paradise" (†).
Theatre 6: "Candyman" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"Bob Roberts" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "Of Mice and Men" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sarafina!" (Darrell James Roodt), with Whoopi Goldberg.
Theatre 3: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 4: "Zebrahead" (†).

34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey.
Theatre 2: "School Ties" (Robert Mandel), with Brendan Fraser.
Theatre 3: "Hero" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"The Public Eye" (†).

Tony Leung and Jane March in "The Lover"

CHRIS CURRY

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
Through Oct. 27: "Double Edge" (Amos Kollek), with Faye Dunaway.
From Oct. 28: "A Day in October" (Kenneth Madsen), with D. B. Sweeney and Kelly Wolf.

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Bob Roberts" (†).
Theatre 2: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Ninth Israel Film Festival.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "Unforgiven" (Clint Eastwood), with Eastwood, Gene Hackman, Morgan Freeman, and Richard Harris.
Theatre 2: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Zebrahead" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Hero" (†).
Theatre 2: "Night and the City" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 2: "In the Soup" (Alexandre Rockwell), with Seymour Cassel, Steve Buscemi, Jennifer Beals, Will Patton, Stanley Tucci, and Pat Moya.
Theatre 3: "Enchanted April" (†).

Art East Cinema, 1st Ave. at 61st. (644-1111)
Through Oct. 27: "Mistress" (Barry Primus), with Robert Wuhl.
From Oct. 28: "Venice/Venice" (Henry Jaglom), with Nelly Alard and Jaglom.

First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd. (752-4600)
Theatre 1: "Sneakers" (†).
Theatre 2: "Of Mice and Men" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Public Eye" (†).
Theatre 4: "1492: Conquest of Paradise" (†).
Theatre 5: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 6: "Frozen Assets" (George Miller), with Shelley Long and Corbin Bernsen.

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Candyman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey.

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"Husbands and Wives" (†).

New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "A River Runs Through It" (†).
Theatre 2: "School Ties" (Robert Mandel), with Brendan Fraser.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"Johnny Stecchino" (Roberto Benigni), with Benigni.

Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Pure Country" (Christopher Cain), with George Strait, Lesley Ann Warren, and Isabel Glasser.

East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"1492: Conquest of Paradise" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "Night and the City" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hero" (†).

Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (876-2400)
Theatre 1: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 2: "Zebrahead" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mr. Saturday Night" (†).
Theatre 4: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).
Theatre 5: "Candyman" (†).
Theatre 6: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey.
Theatre 7: "The Mighty Ducks" (Stephen Herek), with Emilio Estevez, Joss Ackland, and Lane Smith.

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 2: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Nov. 3: "Interpretation of Dreams" (1990, directed by Andrei Zagdansky; in Russian). From Nov. 4: "The Quarrel" (Eli Cohen),.
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Feed" (Kevin Rafferty and James Ridgeway), a documentary

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.
Theatre 2: "Of Mice and Men" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "The Public Eye" (†).
Theatre 2: "Night and the City" (†).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Whole Truth" (Dan Cohen), with Cohen.
Theatre 2: "Frozen Assets" (George Miller), with Shelley Long and Corbin Bernsen.
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 27: "Brother's Keeper" (Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky), a documentary. From Oct. 28: "A Day in October" (Kenneth Madsen), with D. B. Sweeney and Kelly Wolf.
Theatre 4: "Bob Roberts" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey.
Theatre 2: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Public Eye" (†).
Theatre 4: "Sneakers" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 6: "Night and the City" (†).
Theatre 7: "Hero" (†).
Theatre 8: "Night and the City" (†).
Theatre 9: "Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.
Theatre 2: "Singles" (†).
Theatre 3: "Of Mice and Men" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Frozen Assets" (George Miller), with Shelley Long and Corbin Bernsen.
Theatre 2: "Sneakers" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.
Theatre 4: "The Public Eye" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Oct. 27: "Bob Roberts" (†). From Oct. 28: "A Day in October" (Kenneth Madsen), with D. B. Sweeney and Kelly Wolf.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"Mr. Saturday Night" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"Singles" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Glengarry Glen Ross" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 55th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Of Mice and Men" (†).
Theatre 2: "Deadly Currents" (Simcha Jacobovici), a documentary.

Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
Through Oct. 29: "Howards End" (†).
From Oct. 30: "The Lover" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
Through Oct. 29: "Gas Food Lodging" (Allison Anders), with Brooke Adams, Ione Skye, and Fairuza Balk.
From Oct. 30: "Howards End" (†).

Columbus Circle, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"A River Runs Through It" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Night and the City" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Danzón" (Maria Novaro; a Mexican film, in Spanish).
Theatre 2: "A Brief History of Time" (†).
Theatre 3: Through Oct. 29: "Swoon" (Tom Kalin), with Craig Chester and Daniel Schlachet. From Oct. 30: "Waterland" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Husbands and Wives" (†).
Theatre 2: "Pure Country" (Christopher Cain), with George Strait and Lesley Ann Warren.
Theatre 3: "Reservoir Dogs" (†).
Theatre 4: "Hero" (†).
Theatre 5: "Consenting Adults" (Alan J. Pakula), with Kevin Kline, Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio, and Kevin Spacey.
Theatre 6: "Under Siege" (Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal.

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Sneakers" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Public Eye" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "Candyman" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Under Siege" (directed by Andrew Davis), with Steven Seagal, Tommy Lee Jones, and Gary Busey.
Theatre 2: "Under Siege."
Theatre 3: "Candyman" (†).
Theatre 4: "Candyman" (†).
Theatre 5: "Night and the City" (†).
Theatre 6: "Innocent Blood" (John Landis), with Anne Parillaud, Robert Loggia, Anthony LaPaglia, and Don Rickles.
Theatre 7: "South Central" (†).

Embassy I, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"Zebrahead" (†).

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Sarafina!" (Darrell James Roodt), with Whoopi Goldberg.
Theatre 2: "Hero" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Mighty Ducks" (Stephen Herek), with Emilio Estevez.

Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"1492: Conquest of Paradise" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Dr. Giggles" (Manny Coto), with Larry Drake.
Theatre 2: "The Last of the Mohicans" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through Oct. 29: "The Honeymoon Killers" (1970, directed by Leonard Kastle), with Shirley Stoler and Tony Lo Bianco.
From Oct. 30: "8½" (†).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Oct. 26: "L'Avventura" (1959, Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti, Gabriele Ferzetti, and Léa Massari; and "L'Amore" (1948, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Anna Magnani.
Oct. 27: "Macbeth" (1971, Roman Polanski), with Jon Finch; and "Othello" (1965, Stuart Burge), performed by Laurence Olivier and the National Theatre of Great Britain.
Oct. 28: "Topaz" (1969, Alfred Hitchcock), with Frederick Stafford; and "Torn Curtain" (1966, Hitchcock), with Paul Newman and Julie Andrews.
Oct. 29: "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" (1919, Robert Wiene; a German silent film), with Werner Krauss, Conrad Veidt, Lil Dagover, and Fredrich Feher; and "M" (†).
Oct. 30-31: "Take the Money and Run" (1969, Woody Allen), with Allen and Janet Margolin; and "Bananas" (1971, Allen), with Allen.
Nov. 1: "Children of Paradise" (1945, Marcel Carné; in French), with Jean-Louis Barrault, Arletty, Pierre Brasseur, Louis Salou, Marcel Herrand, Pierre Renoir, and Maria Casarès.
Nov. 2: "Le Jour Se Lève" (see page 30); and "Bizarre, Bizarre" (1937, Carné; in French), with Louis Jouvet, Françoise Rosay, Jean-Louis Barrault, Michel Simon, and Jean-Pierre Aumont.

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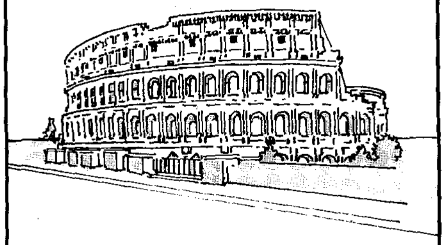

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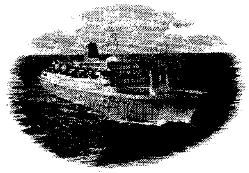

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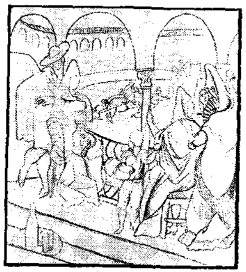

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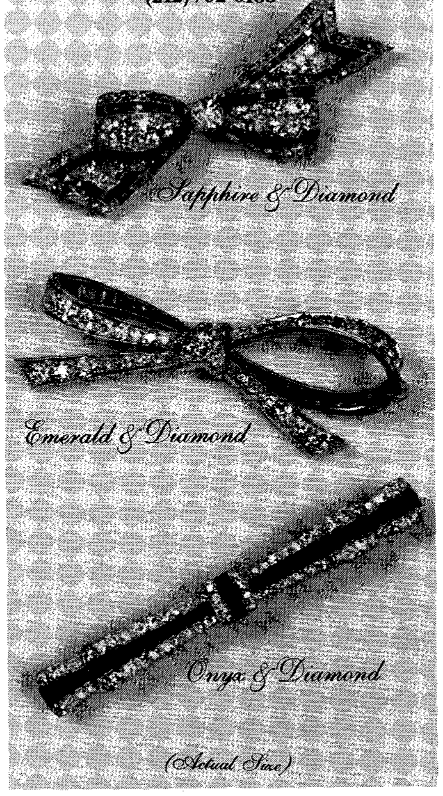

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Nov. 3: "Someone to Watch Over Me" (†); and "Black Rain" (1989, Ridley Scott), with Michael Douglas, Andy Garcia, Ken Takakura, and Kate Capshaw.

Nov. 4: "Foreign Correspondent" (1940, Alfred Hitchcock), with Joel McCrea, Laraine Day, and George Sanders; and "Saboteur" (1942, Hitchcock), with Priscilla Lane, Robert Cummings, and Otto Kruger.

Tribeca Cinema, 41 White St. (925-2570)

Through Oct. 27: "Working Girl" (1988, Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Sigourney Weaver, and Melanie Griffith; and "Witness" (1985, Peter Weir), with Ford, Kelly McGillis, and Lukas Haas.

Oct. 28-29: "Wall Street" (1987, Oliver Stone), with Michael Douglas, Charlie Sheen, Daryl Hannah, and Martin Sheen; and "The War of the Roses" (1989, Danny DeVito), with Douglas, Kathleen Turner, and DeVito.

Oct. 30-31: "Midnight Cowboy" (1969, John Schlesinger), with Dustin Hoffman, Jon Voight, and Brenda Vaccaro; and "Lenny" (1974, Bob Fosse), with Hoffman, Valerie Perrine, and Gary Morton.

Nov. 1: "La Grande Illusion" (†); and "The Rules of the Game" (1939, Jean Renoir; in French), with Marcel Dalio and Nora Gregor.

Nov. 2-3: "Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex" (1972, Woody Allen), with Allen; and "Stardust Memories" (1980, Allen), with Allen, Charlotte Rampling, Jessica Harper, and Marie-Christine Barrault.

From Nov. 4: "Wild Is the Wind" (1957, George Cukor), with Anna Magnani, Anthony Quinn, and Anthony Franciosa; and "The Black Orchid" (1959, Martin Ritt), with Sophia Loren, Quinn, and Ina Balin.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level. (875-5600)—Oct. 26 at 2: "Il Grido" (1957, directed by Michelangelo Antonioni; in Italian), with Steve Cochran, Alida Valli, and Betsy Blair. . . . ¶ Oct. 26 at 4:15, Oct. 27 at 2, and Oct. 28 at 2, 4:30, 7, and 9:30: "L'Avventura" (1959, Antonioni; in Italian), with Monica Vitti, Gabriele Ferzetti, and Léa Massari. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 2 and 6:30 and Oct. 30 at 4:15 and 9: "La Notte" (1962, Antonioni; in Italian), with Jeanne Moreau, Marcello Mastroianni, and Vitti. . . . ¶ Oct. 29 at 4:15 and 9 and Oct. 30 at 2 and 6:30: "The Eclipse" (1962, Antonioni; in Italian), with Alain Delon and Vitti. . . . ¶ Oct. 31-Nov. 1 at 2: "The Witches" (1990, Nicolas Roeg), with Anjelica Huston. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 4 and 9 and Nov. 3 at 2 and 7: "Red Desert" (1964, Antonioni; in Italian), with Vitti and Richard Harris. . . . ¶ Oct. 31 at 6:15, Nov. 1 at 4 and 8:30, and Nov. 3 at 4:15 and 9:15: "Blow-Up" (1966, Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings. . . . ¶ Nov. 1 at 6:30: "Zabriskie Point" (1970, Antonioni).

MOVIES IN BRIEF

SEE PRECEDING PAGES FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA"
DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

Gabin Fever

In the opening scene of Marcel Carné's 1939 masterpiece of poetic realism "Le Jour se Lève" (playing November 2, at Theatre 80 St. Marks), a good-hearted sandblaster named François (Jean Gabin) shoots a man. He spends the next eighty minutes reconstructing the forces leading to the crime, as the police spray the room with bullets. Carné uses contrasts in editing styles and music to distinguish past from present more evocatively and directly than any voice-over could. And his famed designer, Alexandre Trauner, devises naturalistic sets that underline the hero's *tristesse.* François's apartment building juts up naked in the sky; the jolly Dubonnet ad painted on its side comes off as a subtle mockery.

Gabin doesn't paint his wrenching portrait of a seemingly simple, emotionally complex worker; he sculpts it out of iron. François's fate is set when he becomes involved with a florist's helper (Jacqueline Laurent), a dog-act ringmaster (Jules Berry), and the ringmaster's former assistant (Arletty). He enters the romantic universe of Carné and his poet-screenwriter, Jacques Prévert, where sexual rascality and true love, virtue and folly, tenderness and violence emerge and recombine in the characters of modest, silent types and gaudy blowhards, virginal and knowing women. "Le Jour se Lève" is a model of moviemaking economy and expressiveness.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Bob Roberts—Tim Robbins is the writer, director, and star of this mock documentary that chronicles, C-SPAN style, the senatorial campaign of a young radical-right demagogue. Bob Roberts is a folksinger: instead of giving speeches, he picks up an acoustic guitar and invites his audiences to sing along with his reactionary "protest" anthems. He's Pat Buchanan in Woody Guthrie's clothing, and what's scary about the movie is that this grotesque coupling doesn't even feel like a stretch. Robbins tosses off nasty satiric riffs at a reckless, headlong pace, and the movie, even at its most chilling, is hilarious; its humor is both precise enough to deflate its targets and goofy enough to feel liberating. And his performance as smiling Bob, although it's conceived as a caricature, is never tiresome: it's too finely detailed, and too gleeful. This terrifically entertaining movie represents something very unlikely and very welcome: liberal humor with sharp teeth. Also with Gore Vidal, Alan Rickman, Giancarlo Esposito, Brian Murray, and Ray Wise. The songs are by Tim Robbins and his brother, David.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/7/92.) (Gramercy, Sutton, and Quad Cinema. . . . ¶ Worldwide Cinemas; through Oct. 27.)

A Brief History of Time—Errol Morris's inspirational documentary essay about the physicist Stephen Hawking is a cross between a puff piece and a gee-whiz science special. The movie is even more abstract than it has to be, and it's remarkably soft-edged. In the biographical sections, Morris sketches Hawking as a wayward boy wonder who focusses his talents only after he's stricken with Lou Gehrig's disease. As far as characterization goes, that's it. There's some curiosity but no depth in the director's depiction of eccentric British intellectuals; he treats his interviewees as if he were pinning them to specimen boards, except that he doesn't name or identify them. Morris presents Hawking's ironic contrasts between human mortality and the life span of the universe with such hushed awe that he robs them of their delectability.

(The familiar ripple of Philip Glass's music doesn't help.) By the end, the film disappears into its own cranium.—M.S. (9/7/92) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Candyman—An intrepid female graduate student ventures into Chicago's inner city, camera in hand, and falls prey to a bogeyman who carves up disbelievers with a hook. The academic is that mischievous-eyed blonde Virginia Madsen, and the Candyman (Tony Todd) is black; the racial brinkmanship is the film's most original and effective gimmick. Madsen gives a juicy B-picture performance, throwing herself into each absurd display of hubris, but the movie is just a gory campfire tale. To generate any genuine fun, it needs to be seen in a city, at midnight. The writer-director, Bernard Rose, adapted Clive Barker's short story, "The Forbidden."—M.S. (10/19/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

8½ (1963)—Fellini's celebrated autobiographical phantasmagoria. Guido (Marcello Mastroianni), the director-hero, is the center of the film's universe, the creator on whose word everything waits, the man sought after by everyone. He can do anything, and the possibilities confuse him. Just as "La Dolce Vita" confirmed popular suspicions about the depravity of the rich and gifted, "8 1/2" confirms the popular view of the life of a *successful* genius. We see Guido's conflicts between his love for his wife, his desire for his mistress, his ideal of innocence, and his dreams of a harem, and we are given to understand that he must come to grips with himself as a precondition to "creation." The multi-ringed circus of "8½" is such a luxuriously externalized version of an artist's inner life that it's more like the fantasy of someone who wishes that he were a movie director—someone who has soaked up those movie versions of an artist's life, in which in the midst of a carnival or a ball the hero receives inspiration and dashes away to transmute life into art. It's a deluxe glorification of creative crisis, visually arresting (the dark and light contrasts are extraordinary, magical) but in some essential way conventional-minded. The cast includes Anouk Aimée, Sandra Milo, Claudia Cardinale, Rossella Falk, Barbara Steele, Madeleine Lebeau, Guido Alberti as the producer, Jean Rougeul as the critic, Annibale Ninchi as Guido's father, and Edra Gale as La Saraghina. The cinematography is by Gianni Di Venanzo; the score is by Nino Rota; the script is by Fellini, Ennio Flaiano, and others. In Italian.—P.K. (Film Forum; starting Oct. 30.)

Enchanted April—Adapted by Peter Barnes from Elizabeth von Arnim's 1922 novel, this period romance has a healthy sprinkling of bewitchments. The lead characters are two proper middle-class English ladies, played by Josie Lawrence and Miranda Richardson, who, partly to get away from their husbands, pool their resources to rent an Italian villa named San Salvatore for a month. They ultimately share expenses with an austere, cultured widow (Joan Plowright) and a gorgeous, bored aristocrat (Polly Walker). Italy awakens the women's sensuality and imagination, and gives them perspective; Lawrence and Richardson end up jolting their deadhead husbands (played by Alfred Molina and Jim Broadbent) back to life. The director, Mike Newell, handles the performers deftly and sympathetically, from the wonderfully ebullient Lawrence and the ravishing Walker to the robustly comical Plowright; Michael Kitchen contributes a tour de force of eccentric charm as the villa's owner. If the film, with its brittle, satiric London scenes and its expansive Italian ones, breaks too distinctly into pieces, the magic of the sunnier locations seals the cracks.—M.S. (8/10/92) (Angelika Film Center, and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

1492: Conquest of Paradise—Ridley Scott's dead-in-the-water attempt to update and preserve the Columbus myth in the person of Gérard Depardieu. A virtuoso of the ersatz, Scott overdoses on fancy lighting and atmospheric fog and smoke effects, and overrelies on his composer, Vangelis, who whips up aural hurricanes. The movie is one huge objet d'non-art. The screenwriter, Roselyne Bosch, was formerly a reporter, and this script—her first—operates like checklist journalism as it steers a middle course between hero-worship and revisionism. With Sigourney Weaver (as Isabella), Armand Assante, Angela Molina, Fernando Rey, Michael Wincott, Tcheky Karyo, and Steven Waddington, the film combines American, British, Spanish, and French actors without adjusting for their jarring styles and accents. Depardieu has so little authority in English that when he rallies his sailors, you'd understand if they jumped overboard.—M.S. (10/19/92) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, First & 62nd Cinemas, East 85th Street, and Astor Plaza.)

Glengarry Glen Ross—David Mamet's 1984 Pulitzer Prize-winner—about real-estate salesmen who put the screws on hapless marks in order to keep their own ugly jobs—made ripping theatre, whatever else it was or wasn't. But the movie, set in the lean Bush years, spells out the characters' despair in cue cards, right from the start, and hammers away at the plot so relentlessly that you can feel the nails entering the back of your skull. Still, the performers provide relief. Ed Harris and Alan Arkin, as the sleek yet panicky Moss and the sad-sack Aaronow, turn their "Are we speaking or are we talking?" duet into an existential Abbott-and-Costello number. Al Pacino, as Roma, Mamet's Mr. Slick, is amusingly lordly: he's simultaneously high-handed and underhanded. And Kevin Spacey, as their steely office manager, Williamson, plants a daringly long fuse and ignites it with the smallest flicker. Only Jack Lemmon, as Shelley (the Machine) Levene, disappoints: he starts strong, but the director, James Foley, lets him drown in unearned emotion, as if this were Lemmon's shot at "Death of a Salesman." Mamet did his own adaptation, adding another ruthless person to the melodrama: a head-office hit man played by Alec Baldwin.—M.S. (10/5/92) (Village Theatre VII, Sutton, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and 57th St. Playhouse.)

La Grande Illusion (1937)—In form, "La Grande Illusion" is an escape story; yet who would think of it in this way? It's like saying that "Oedipus Rex" is a detective story. Among other things, this film is a study of human needs and the subtle barriers of class among a group of prisoners and their captors during the First World War. The two aristocrats—the German prison commander von Rauffenstein (Erich von Stroheim) and his prisoner the French officer de Boeldieu (Pierre Fresnay)—share a common world of memories and sentiments. Though their class is doomed by the changes that produced the war, they must act out the rituals of noblesse oblige and serve a nationalism they don't believe in. The Frenchman sacrifices his life for men he doesn't really approve of—the plebian Maréchal (Jean Gabin) and the Jew Rosenthal (Marcel Dalio). Jean Renoir directed this elegy for the death of the old European aristocracy, and it is one of the true masterpieces of the screen. Von Rauffenstein and de Boeldieu are in a great romantic tradition; Cyrano has his plume, they draw on their white gloves. Maréchal, the mechanic who has become an officer, is uneasy in the presence of urbanity and polish, but he has natural gallantry, and he's the one with survival power. The performances of von Stroheim, Fresnay, and Gabin are in three different styles of acting, and they illuminate one another. With Gabin, you're not aware of any performance; with von Stroheim and Fresnay, you are—and you should be: they represent a way of life that is dedicated to superbly controlled outer appearances. With Dita Parlo, Gaston Modot, Julien Carette, Jean Dasté, Georges Péclet, and Jacques Becker (who was the assistant director). Written by Charles Spaak and Renoir; the music is by Kosma; the camera-

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work is by Christian Matras and Claude Renoir. In French, with the German and English characters speaking in their own languages.—P.K. (Tribeca Cinema; Nov. 1.)

Hero—Stephen Frears' new movie often feels like a remake of something from the thirties or forties. Its plot premise—an ordinary man is lionized by the media for a courageous act he didn't perform, and the actual hero can't get anyone to see the truth—provides the sort of material that Preston Sturges and Frank Capra liked to work with. And the script, an original by David Webb Peoples (who also wrote "Unforgiven"), even borrows from John Ford: in a sense, this picture is a screwball-comedy take on "The Man Who Shot Liberty Valance." The movie is fascinating to watch, but most of the time you're sitting there wondering why this ingeniously constructed script isn't playing better. Simply stated, Peoples hasn't written many funny lines, and Frears' attempts to create comic business visually feel strained and unspontaneous. The filmmakers fail to supply the incidental pleasures and the joyous sense of immediacy that screwball farce—even ironic, subversive screwball farce—can't do without. Dustin Hoffman, who plays the real hero, doesn't get any kind of rhythm going until the movie is almost over; and Andy Garcia, as the faker, can't quite rise above his cryptically written role. But Geena Davis, as a hot-shot TV reporter, is smashing: she strikes a lovely balance between warmth and satiric precision, and holds it in the midst of the general chaos.—T.R. (10/5/92) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Baronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

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J.D. KING

Howards End—James Ivory's movie version of the 1910 E. M. Forster novel is a handsome and intelligent piece of work: a faithful, well-paced, and carefully crafted dramatization of a very good story. The heroine, Margaret Schlegel (Emma Thompson), is a thirtyish Englishwoman of German ancestry who lives with her sister and her brother in a London town house. The plot brings the cultured and rather high-minded Schlegels in contact with a very different sort of family, the Wilcoxes, who appear to represent English values at their most infuriatingly solid and complacent. The emotional core of the movie is the brief, unlikely friendship that develops between Margaret and conservative Ruth Wilcox (Vanessa Redgrave), a woman who inhabits a narrow world so profoundly, and with such enormous feeling, that she transforms it. Redgrave is at her most radiant in this role. And Thompson, whose character is meant to be seen as the heir to Mrs. Wilcox's thoroughly English kind of spirituality, comes through with a thrilling, original performance; she carries the movie. These luminous performances go a long way toward putting Forster's ambitious ideas across on the screen. (Anthony Hopkins, as the no-nonsense businessman Henry Wilcox, is awfully good, too.) The story holds us for the full two hours and twenty minutes that the movie takes to tell it; Ivory and his screenwriter, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, have done a skillful and sensitive job of adaptation. All that's missing, really, is the elusive quality that makes Forster such a brave, moving writer: his constant striving to see beyond the story, to see through it, to transcend it. Also with Helena Bonham Carter, Samuel West, James Wilby, Nicola Duffett, Prunella Scales, and Adrian Ross Magenty.—T.R. (5/4/92) (Fine Arts; through Oct. 29. . . . ¶ Cinema 3; starting Oct. 30.)

Husbands and Wives—Woody Allen's uncomfortably personal new movie renders the dissolution of a marriage in a style that's meant to look raw, rough-edged, truthful. He uses jump-cutting and wobbly hand-held camerawork to create the illusion of immediacy, of lifelike spontaneity and muddle. But the movie's vision of life isn't really very persuasive, and Allen isn't saying anything that he hasn't said before. The only thing that has changed since his late-seventies explorations of romantic futility (such as "Annie Hall" and "Manhattan") is the tone, which is now sour, dispirited, almost vindictive. The cinéma-vérité surface feels like a con, a razzle-dazzle cover for imaginative exhaustion. Both the style and the substance of this picture have a curdled quality, the air of things that have gone bad but haven't been thrown away. Except for Judy Davis's ebullient performance as a friend of the central couple, Gabe and Judy Roth (Allen and Mia Farrow), the movie's humor is surprisingly flat. Allen's gags and situations no longer betray even a trace of delight at the absurdities of human behavior: his bemused vision of romantic folly has turned, over the years, into a bilious take-my-wife-please routine. It's tempting to think of this bleakly nihilistic film as an expression of its creator's weariness with his own ideas. The most disturbing, and angering, thing about the picture is that Allen has transformed his disappointment in himself into disgust for other people: he's going down, and he's determined to take the rest of us with him. Also with Liam Neeson, Juliette Lewis, Sydney Pollack, Lysette Anthony, and Benno Schmidt.—T.R. (9/21/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Beekman, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

The Last of the Mohicans—In Michael Mann's version of James Fenimore Cooper's improbably durable tall tale, everybody looks great: the movie seduces us with haircuts and landscape. The hero of this melodramatic story of pre-Revolutionary America is Hawkeye (Daniel Day-Lewis), a rugged but sensitive individualist who roams the forest of the Hudson Valley in the company of two Indians, Chingachgook (Russell Means) and Uncas (Eric Schweig). The three men serve as guides and bodyguards for Cora and Alice Munro (Madeleine Stowe and Jodhi May), the maidenly daughters of a British officer. The Brits are at war with the French, but the greatest danger to Anglo-Saxon life and limb is posed by a band of bloodthirsty Indian guerrillas, led by a wily Huron named Magua (Wes Studi). The setup pretty much guarantees thrills, and Mann delivers the action-movie goods, but with a sort of abstract, lyrical pictorialism. Day-Lewis's Hawkeye—a cultured white man's dream of virile primitivism—is almost entirely a visual phenomenon, and it works. (He runs well, and sports a terrific mane of straight, stringy alternative-rocker hair.) The picture is awfully, solemnly silly, but it's enjoyable and even rather stirring. Also with Maurice Roëves and Steven Waddington.—T.R. (10/5/92) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Regency, and National Twin.)

The Lover—With Jane March and Tony Leung, directed by Jean-Jacques Annaud. (See illustration on page 28.) (Fine Arts; starting Oct. 30.)

M (1932)—Fritz Lang's first sound film has visual excitement, pace, and brilliance of surface. Above all, it has, caught in a manhunt, a small, fat man, sweating in uncomfortable clothes—the sexual psychopath who murders little girls—interpreted by Peter Lorre with a spark of genius. It is Lorre's triumph that he makes us understand the terrified, suffering human being who murders. The film is based on the case of the Düsseldorf murderer; the police, trying to track him down, disturbed the normal criminal activities of the city, and the underworld organized to find him, so that crime could go on as usual. Lang turns the movie into a melodramatic thriller by centering on this ironic chase—actually, on the two converging chases of the police and the underworld. The structure is so mechanical it's almost pulpy, and the film reaches for other easy effects—it's similar to "The Threepenny Opera" in its satirical use of beggars and criminals. But there's nothing facile about Lorre: trapped by the underworld, he screams, "I can't help myself!" Our identification with him as a psychopath is so complete it's hard to believe that while appearing before Fritz Lang's cameras in the daytime, he was, at night, acting as a comedian in a farce. With Gustaf Gründgens and Otto Wernicke; cinematography by Fritz Arno Wagner; script by Thea von Harbou and others. (The tune Lorre whistles is the theme from Grieg's "Peer Gynt.") In German.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Oct. 29.)

Mr. Saturday Night—Having your joke and eating it, too—that's what Billy Crystal manages to pull off, repeatedly, in this sprawling, laughing-through-tears extravaganza (his directorial début). As Buddy Young, Jr., whom he created ten years ago and developed on "Saturday Night Live" and HBO specials, Crystal pays homage to the Borscht Belt masters of disrespect who brought their tumultuous brand of vulgar, irreverent clowning into the American mainstream during the Golden Age of Television. The Buddy of this movie is sharper and funnier than his previous incarnations: at times, he's a showcase for Crystal's own crack wit and inventiveness. Crystal and his co-writers (Lowell Ganz and Babaloo Mandel) aim to get behind the ironic mask of this Yiddish harlequin and reveal the fierce ambition and bitterness that fuel his put-downs. Crystal is fairly tough about Buddy's self-destructive drive and his parasitic relationship with his brother and right-hand man, Stan (David Paymer). But he also wants to honor Jewish roots, building to a family-reconciliation finish. What saves the film from terminal mawkishness is the chemistry between Crystal and that remarkable actor, Paymer. Crystal's Buddy is always pitching, sometimes wildly. Paymer's Stan is always catching, and, in a subtle, self-abnegating way, calling the shots. With Julie Warner, Mary Maya, Helen Hunt, and Ron Silver.—M.S. (10/5/92) (Orpheum VII, and Ziegfeld.)

My New Gun—With Diane Lane, Stephen Collins, and James Le Gros; directed by Stacy Cochran. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center; starting Oct. 30.)

Night and the City—A remake, directed by Irwin Winkler and written by Richard Price, of Jules Dassin's terrific 1950 film noir. The filmmakers and their star, Robert De Niro, try to tap the Scorsese vein of kinetic urban violence, out-of-control male energy, and brooding, pessimistic wit. Everyone involved in the picture has a formidable resume, but what they've put on the screen is wan, washed-out, blurry—a photocopy of a fax of a carbon of something that was once clear and bold. As in the original film, the story is about a small-time hustler who foolishly invades the turf of a powerful sports promoter and is decisively slapped down for his efforts. Price and Winkler make only the most glancing attempt to re-create the tone of Dassin's movie; they turn the story into a comedy about a lovable loser, a New York motormouth who is supposed to charm us with his indefatigable optimism. Winkler moves the camera constantly, fills the soundtrack with old rock and roll and R. & B., and tries hard to create a gritty atmosphere of low-life New York desperation, but everything he does looks mechanical, as if it had been learned by rote. Price's deft verbal riffing is just decorative. And De Niro's performance, in a role that Richard Widmark played brilliantly in the 1950 version, produces a perfect vacuum at the center of the picture. De Niro isn't charming and he isn't funny; he's like a hologram of himself, recognizable but eerily insubstantial. Also with Jessica Lange, Cliff Gorman, Alan King, Jack Warden, and Eli Wallach.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Criterion Center.)

Of Mice and Men—The director and co-star, Gary Sinise, has been quoted as saying, "I saw the 1939 film version and it was such a product of its time that it meant nothing to me. I thought Lon Chaney, Jr., was real hammy." Actually, Lewis Milestone's version of John Steinbeck's tragic fable, with Burgess Meredith as the shrewd ranch hand George and Chaney as the simple giant Lennie, is a wonderfully wrought classic. This new movie, adapted by Horton Foote—with Sinise as George and John Malkovich as Lennie—is the one that goes high on the hog. Led by Sinise, who edges his profile into every shot as if he were a model in a rustic-clothing catalogue, and Malkovich, who carries on like a further infantilized Tommy Smothers (his upper register recalls Tweety Pie), the cast acts with self-conscious, surface physicality. Ray Walston fits right in with the histrionics on this film's Steppenwolf Ranch; even Joe Morton catches the overacting bug. At least Casey Siemaszko is down-to-earth as the bully, Curley, but for all the talk of humanizing his flirty wife, Sinise hangs Sherilyn Fenn out to dry. The only

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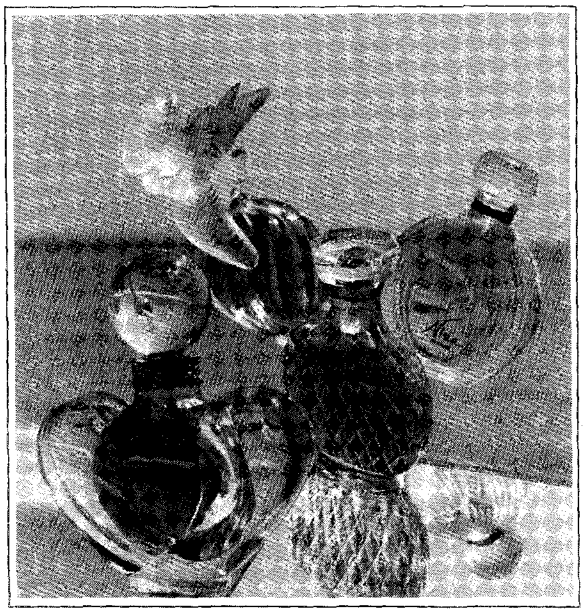

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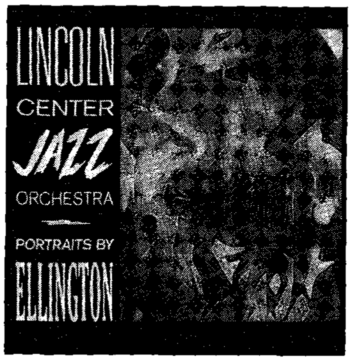

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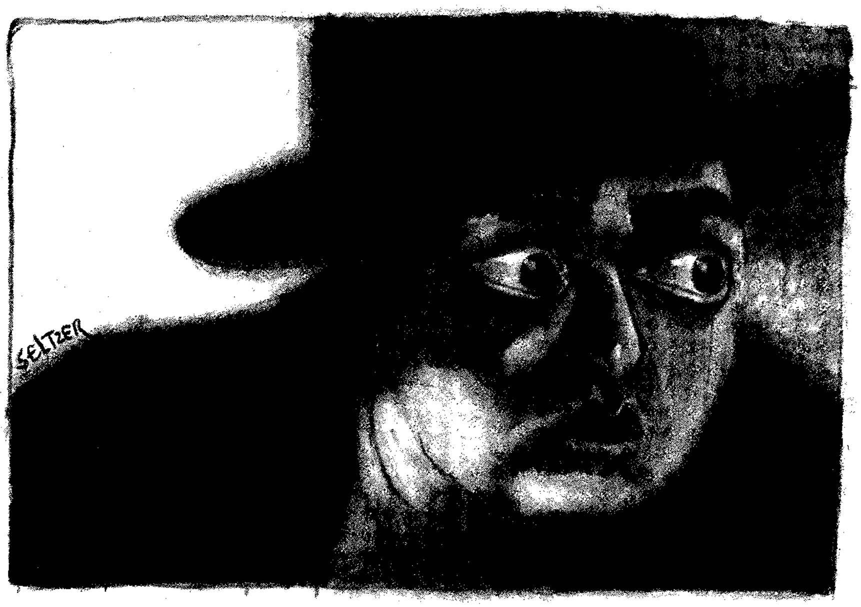

Peter Lorre in "M"

restrained performance is given by Lennie's pup.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Waverly, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

The Public Eye—Inspired by the tabloid-news photographer Weegee, this oddball reverie, set in New York circa 1942, is gorgeous and disappointing. It gets rolling early, then stops cold. When Barbara Hershey, the widow of a fancy-nightclub owner, gets Joe Pesci, a notorious, artistic shutterbug, to investigate a mystery man, the audience is eager to see his hardscrabble vision of life put to use in detective work. But the writer-director, Howard Franklin, comes up with a suspense plot that bogs down in details. While just about all the actors make good impressions—including Pesci, who imbues the hero with acute street reflexes and surprising sensitivity—only Stanley Tucci, as a low-level mobster, and Jerry Adler, as a self-loathing columnist turned playwright, tap any subterranean emotions. What sustains the movie is Franklin's loving, complex evocation of the period; the real world and the photo world bleed into each other, sometimes literally. Peter Suschitzky did the sumptuous, dark-toned cinematography.—M.S. (10/19/92) (34th St. East, First & 62nd Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema.)

Reservoir Dogs—Most of the action in Quentin Tarantino's pulp crime movie takes place in a cavernous warehouse, to which the surviving participants of a botched jewelry heist have repaired to lick their wounds. The crooks amuse themselves by accusing each other of treachery (*someone* tipped off the police), waving their guns, screaming obscenities, and torturing a cop whom one of them has captured. This is, explicitly, a man's world. (There isn't a woman with a speaking part in the movie.) Tarantino emphasizes the characters' absurdity; they're all presented as demented children, little boys with big guns. He wants us to feel as if we had crack-landed in an alternate universe: the Planet of the Goons. The movie runs on film-school cleverness—a homemade pharmaceutical cocktail of pop music, visual jolts, and allusions to Scorsese and Peckinpah. As supercool young directors go, Tarantino (whose first film this is) is fairly engaging: his nihilism is antic and oddly cheery. But the picture is less than the sum of its outrageous gags and inventive bits of business. The dramatic possibilities of infantile bullies goading each other to violence are sadly limited. The story is impressively bloody, but the blood is thin, and it keeps leaking out; Tarantino has all he can do to maintain the movie's pulse. The film, for all its mayhem and fury, is too distant to be truly disturbing; it treats everything with an impatient, born-too-late shrug. This is a reasonably lively picture about nothing, and that's apparently just what it was meant to be. With Harvey Keitel, Tim Roth, Steve Buscemi, Michael Madsen, Lawrence Tierney, and Chris Penn.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Village Theatre VII, Chelsea Cinemas, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

A River Runs Through It—Robert Redford's movie of Norman Maclean's lyrical novella about fly-fishing and family loyalty in Montana is serene, lulling, tranquil—no, it's dead dull. Maclean's story traces the history of its narrator's relationship with his self-destructive kid brother, Paul, through detailed descriptions of their fishing trips; the narrative is driven by the tension between what it's telling us and what it's leaving out. Disastrously, Redford and screenwriter Richard Friedenberg open up the story. They show us too much of what's happening offstage—that is, away from the river—and thus allow the real source of the story's emotions to dissipate. With a delicately balanced narrative like this one, more is inevitably less. (And the extra scenes cooked up by the filmmakers are banal by any standard.) The movie is ravishingly shot (by Philippe Rousselot), but it's lifeless, because it lacks the vital spirit of Maclean's writing: the precision and grace that he seems to have learned, in part, from fly-fishing. Redford and Friedenberg try to catch the story's elusive meanings by lobbing grenades into the river and blowing everything in it out into the light of day. With Craig Sheffer as the narrator, Norman, and Brad Pitt (who looks like a young Redford and gives a lightweight performance) as Paul.—T.R. (10/19/92) (Village Theatre VII, New York Twin, and Columbus Circle.)

Singles—Cameron Crowe's second film as a writer-director (the first was the lovely 1989 teen comedy "Say Anything") is a buoyant, sweet-tempered little picture about the romantic confusions of some young Seattle apartment-dwellers. It's an ensemble piece, the sort of movie that flits from character to character like a hummingbird. Crowe's touch is so light that you may, in the end, feel a bit unsatisfied—disappointed that the movie's buzzing comic vitality starts to lose its resonance the moment you leave the theatre. This is romantic comedy of the wispiest kind, but the picture is generous, graceful, and consistently funny. Campbell Scott and Kyra Sedgwick play Steve and Linda, idealistic yuppies in love, and both prove to be

ISADORE SELTZER

wonderfully deft comedians. And Matt Dillon, as Cliff, the rather dim leader of a band called Citizen Dick, is hilarious. But the standout in Crowe's energetic cast is Bridget Fonda, who plays Janet, a bubbly underachiever inexplicably smitten with Cliff. Fonda is a true original: she brings such reckless, joyous abandon to Janet's pursuit of the unlikely object of desire that she transforms this desperate-love story line into something exuberantly optimistic. This movie shows that Cameron Crowe is a rare bird, too: a sunny realist.—T.R. (Village Theatre VII, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 23rd St. West Triplex, and Festival.)

Sneakers—The director, Phil Alden Robinson, attempts to fashion a liberal thriller-comedy about a group of high-tech security analysts, led by Robert Redford. Under pressure from the National Security Agency, Redford agrees to steal a device that can decode any computer program in the private and public sectors. His character is a sixties survivor (one of the first computer pranksters) who has teamed up with four other overgrown, misfit boys: Sidney Poitier as a canned C.I.A. agent, River Phoenix as an ethereal computer-age juvenile delinquent, Dan Aykroyd as an ex-con gadget freak, and David Strathairn as a blind master of sound tracing. The filmmakers haven't given them the distinctive interplay and kicky gimmicks that can make a comic-book ensemble tickle the fantasy bone. They're a liberal dream team as neutered alternative family, with Redford's love interest, Mary McDonnell, as den mother. The film's smug anti-Republican humor won't win any crossover votes. "Sneakers" exploits an audience's fear of the microchip revolution, then ends up celebrating computer sabotage in the service of progressive causes. It plays into the hands of its enemies; it says that left-wingers *are* a self-righteous élite. With Ben Kingsley, who glowers malignantly in the role of a mysterious genius.—M.S. (9/21/92) (First & 62nd Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, and Metro Cinema.)

Someone to Watch Over Me (1987)—A Manhattan socialite (Mimi Rogers), who writes about art and looks expensively asymmetrical, witnesses a murder; a police detective (Tom Berenger), a warmhearted, decent, uncultivated fellow who lives in Queens with his wife and child, is assigned to protect her. He falls for her, and she for him, and the murderer tries to get at her. That's essentially all there is, except for the high-class hauntedness supplied by Ridley Scott, who directed. He draws you into a dull, sensual daydreaminess, but after watching Tom Berenger and Mimi Rogers for a while, you look around for the stars. With so much buildup—so much terror-tinged atmosphere—you expect actors with some verve, and you wonder why the script (credited to Howard Franklin) doesn't sneak in a few jokes. (Has a good thriller ever been this solemn? Or this simple?) Daniel Hugh Kelly brings some kick to the small role of a cop who has split up with his wife; the only performer who really stands out, though, is Lorraine Bracco, as the detective's wife—her line readings have a hardheaded urban earthiness, and her comedy timing sparks the movie. With Jerry Orbach, Andreas Katsulas, and John Rubinstein. Cinematography by Steven Poster; the title song (by the Gershwins) is performed at the start by Sting, then by Roberta Flack, then by Gene Ammons.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Nov. 3.)

South Central—With Glenn Plummer and Carl Lumbly, directed by Steve Anderson. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Criterion Center.)

Waterland—With Jeremy Irons, Ethan Hawke, and Sinead Cusack; directed by Stephen Gyllenhaal. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Lincoln Plaza; starting Oct. 30.)

Zebrahead—With Michael Rapaport and N'Bushe Wright, directed by Anthony Drazan. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, 59th Street East Cinema, Orpheum VII, and Embassy 1.)

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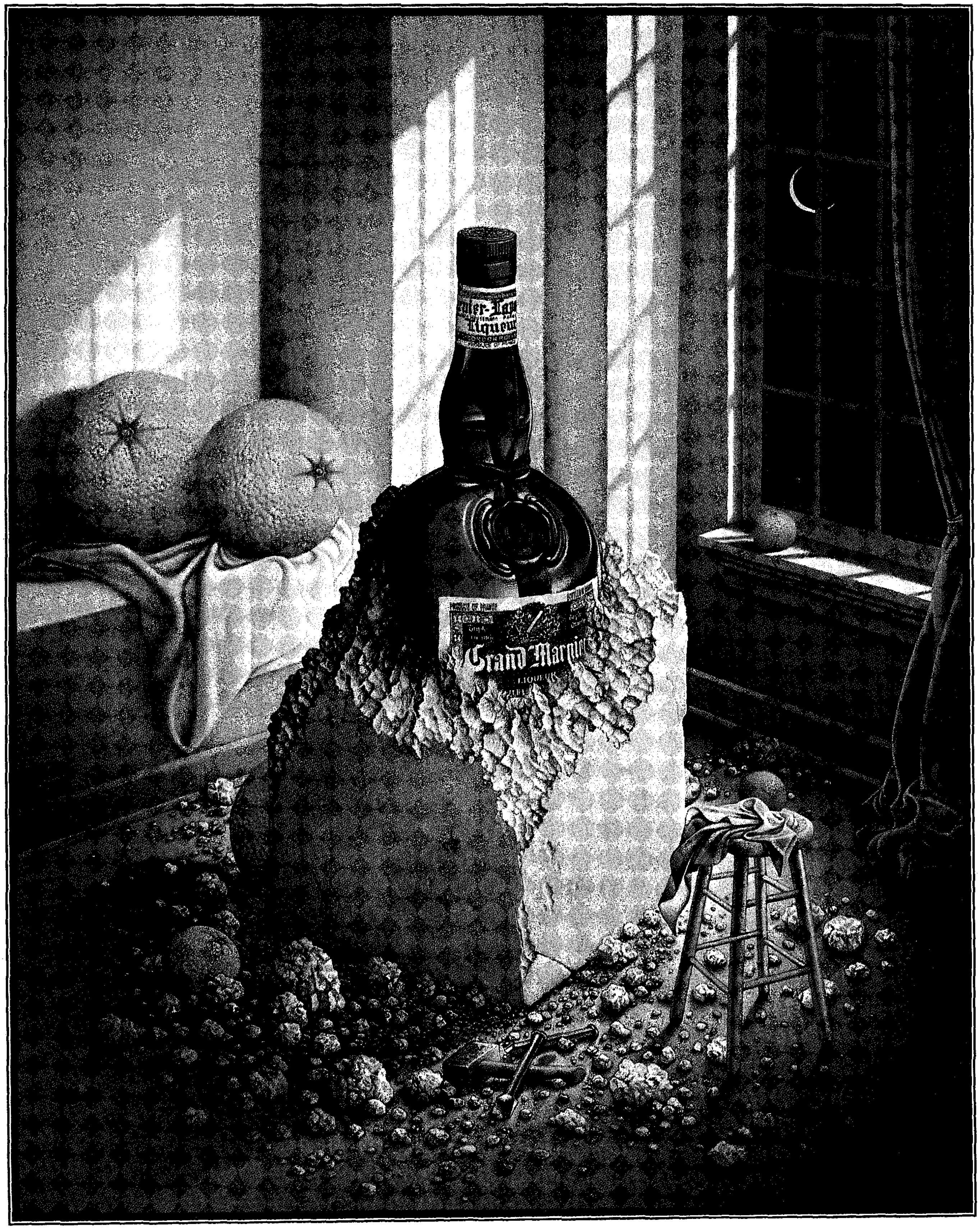

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

FRONT PAGE

AFTER four decades as a reporter, mostly covering the courts for the *Post*, Mike Pearl finds himself something of a celebrity. He softpedals his fame, saying, "This whole legend thing—If I'm what a legend is these days, then that's because the colorful figures who were around when I came into the business have all disappeared, and they have to settle for me." But Pearl should not be mistaken for an entirely retiring kind of guy: he has wallpapered a third of the Criminal Court pressroom with his own front-page stories—a display ironically known as the Wall of Shame, because of the screaming headlines, many from the Murdoch days. ("300-LB GIANT SEIZED IN SEX ATTACK" is an example.) "My detractors will tell you that it's just byline fever—that I just want to get my name on everything," Pearl says. "But bylines to me are a gauge, like 'How'm I doin'?' Whether I'm effectual, still doing it right. It's really not true that bylines excite me—it's the stories." Anyway, a legend he is, and on November 4th fellow *Post* reporters are throwing him a party at the Lion's Head to celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the day he landed his first job in journalism. Judges, prosecutors, the D.A., and defendants like Sydney Biddle Barrows, otherwise known as the Mayflower Madam, have been invited.

Pearl is renowned for his interest in the human side of the law. "The first question is 'What color was the woman's hair?' " says Mike Cherkasky, the chief of the D.A.'s investigations division, and Linda Fairstein, the head of the D.A.'s sex-crimes unit, recalls a time in the mid-seventies when Pearl dropped in to chat about a case, closed his notebook, got up to leave, and then inquired casually how her gruelling job affected her social life. As she remembers the headline in the *Post* the next day, it read, "THE LEGAL MISS WHO MISSES KISSES." Fairstein has forgiven him, and says these days that Pearl is "head and shoulders the best at what he does." Robert Morgenthau, the Manhattan District Attorney, says, "He's a damn good reporter, sometimes with a creative twist to what he writes, but a real pro. He knows what his paper's interested in. He knows how to package a story so it gets in the paper."

Fellow-reporters remember the shoe incident. It happened during the trial of Bernhard Goetz, when courthouse scribes were scrambling to figure out what to write about after a day of particularly boring testimony by one of the teen-agers who had tried to mug Goetz on the subway. At one point while he was on the stand, the boy reached toward his feet. Some reporters assumed that he was trying to scratch his ankle, but after a huddled conference Pearl and the late Frank Faso, who reported on the courts for the *News*, concluded otherwise. "They decided he was reaching for his shoe to throw it at Bernie Goetz," says Larry Sutton, who also used to cover the courts for the *News*. "That guaranteed both of them a big story for the next day and the eternal enmity of the *Times* and the wire services." Subsequently, reporters were known to shout "The shoe! The shoe!" when Pearl delivered his theories about cases in the courthouse pressroom. "Oh, the great shoe controversy," says Pearl. He swears that it happened just as he wrote it, and suggests that other reporters were looking at their notebooks during the moment of drama.

There were seven major dailies in the city when Pearl started out in the newspaper business, after a stint in the Marines, art school, and a series of unliterary jobs, including one selling men's underwear at Saks Fifth Avenue. He was a copyboy at the *Mirror* for three years, and then was promoted to reporter. "I had index cards, I wrote down every kind of crime and what questions you were supposed to ask," he says. "The most important thing was to find out what was a story. And the *Mirror* was a tabloid, so what was a tabloid story? Celebrities, money, babies, violence. There were five or six elements. Animals. Sex. If you get two or three

CHRIS CURRY

of them at once, you get a great story."

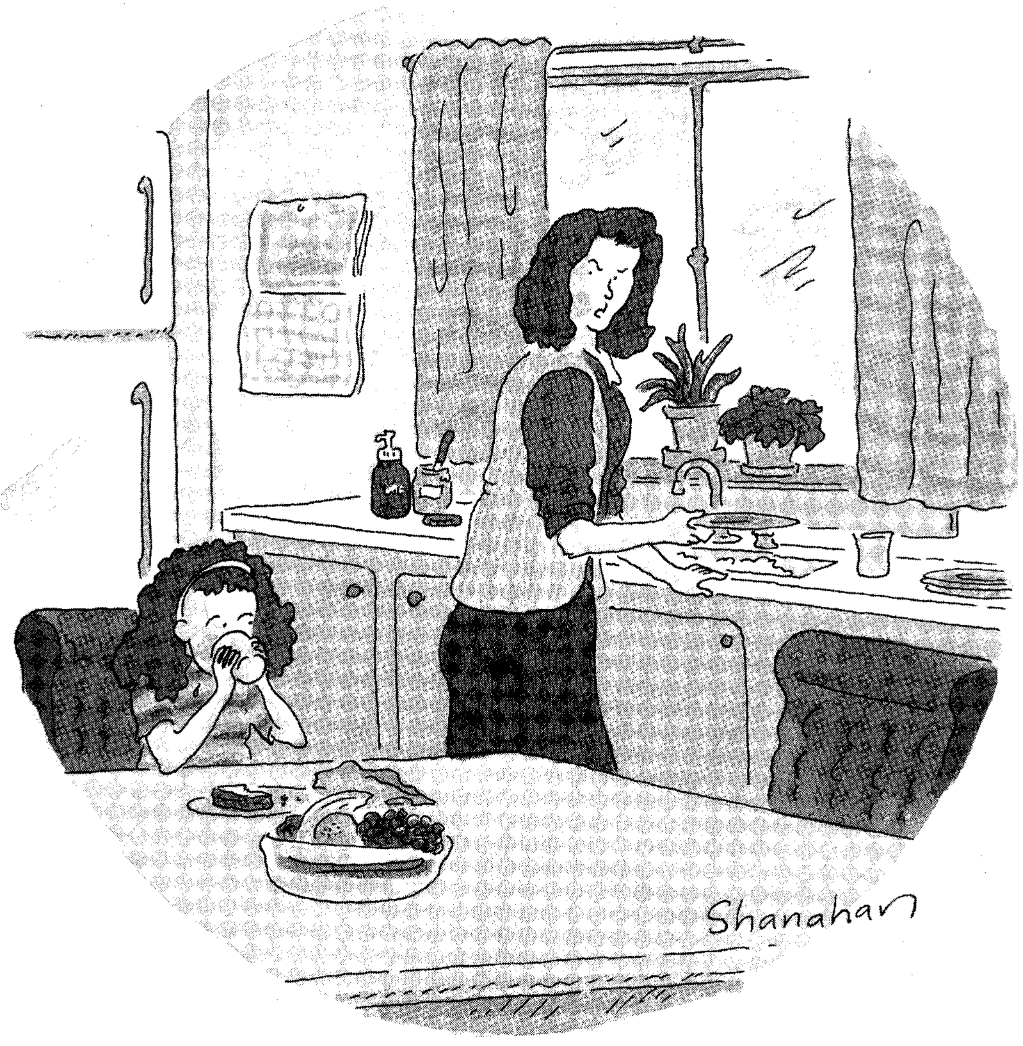
Pearl's life story, as he tells it, is a string of lucky breaks—you might say the kind of story he searches out professionally. When the *Mirror* folded, in 1963, everyone on the staff went out and got drunk—everyone but Pearl. He went home to bed. He got up early the next morning and headed for the *Journal-American*, which, like the *Mirror*, was a Hearst paper. He took the wrong turn on the sixth floor, missed the newsroom, and stumbled on a meeting between *Mirror* editors and the publisher of the *Journal-American*. "One of the *Mirror* editors said, 'What are you doing here?' I said, 'I want a job.' He said, 'You want the newsroom—it's that way.' Apparently, the conversation after I left went 'Who is that?' 'Mike Pearl, a young reporter.' I was one of two reporters hired from the *Mirror*." In 1966, when the *Journal-American*, the *World-Telegram & Sun*, and the *Herald Tribune* were consolidated into the *World Journal Tribune*, known in the business as the Widget, Pearl wrote crime features there. The Widget lasted only eight months, however. Pearl learned he was out of work from a bank officer who casually remarked, "It's a shame about the *Journal Tribune*." That same day—his birthday, as it happened—he bumped into a *Times* reporter writing about how reporters at the Widget had learned the news. "I'm the lead of your story," Pearl told him, and, because he indeed became the lead, Pearl got a number of job offers and landed at the *Post*.

Twenty-five years later, at age sixty-three, Pearl confesses to thoughts of retirement—he says he wouldn't mind travelling to China and Japan, and might like to write detective fiction—but thinks that it isn't quite time yet. He says, "When I was a young man, an old reporter I knew decided to retire, and when I didn't understand why, he said, 'When you're covering a fire and you say to yourself, "I've covered bigger fires than this"—that's when it's time to punch out.' Using that as a criterion, I'm not ready."

RED STARS

SERGEI PLEKHANOV has a job in Hollywood. "My role is minor," he says modestly, but in fact it was not an easy role to get. He has written the Russian subtitles for the three-hour HBO film "Stalin"—which premières in Moscow on November 7th, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution, with President Boris Yeltsin in attendance, and will be broadcast here on November 21st—and the job required nothing less than having experienced Stalin's complete legacy, down to its convulsive death scene. "I grew up in a country where Stalin was like God," says Plekhanov, who was a schoolboy in Moscow when the death of the deity was announced. "We thought that it was the end of the world—that we wouldn't be able to live without him. Stalin was the father, the kindly leader. The two qualities one associated with him were wisdom and kindness." Plekhanov's unquestioning love for the leader was nothing extraordinary, he believes. "My family was Stalinist in the sense that they were good citizens," he said recently. Growing up, as he understood it, was a gradual movement away from the worship of Stalin. "The need for such a figure diminishes," he said. But this was not simply natural maturation; the change also coincided with the period of de-Stalinization under Khrushchev. "When I began to read about Stalin's crimes," he recalled, "that was an important stage in my political development."

Plekhanov became enthralled with America, and eventually joined the Institute for the Study of the U.S.A. and Canada, the chief foreign-policy center advising the Kremlin on its adversary. In 1988, he became a deputy director, but his rise had taken place during Brezhnev's seemingly eternal "era of stagnation." "I began to



"I thought I told you not to drink your milk."

wonder if Stalin had really been inevitable," he said. "That was an awful thought. The idea of reclaiming the original value of the revolution became the centerpiece of my thinking." Plekhanov wished to believe that somehow the reform of Communism was possible, because Stalin had been a monstrous aberration. "It took Gorbachev to start the discussion anew," he said.

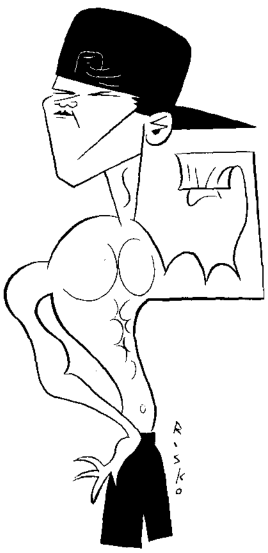
In 1989, with *perestroika* at its height, Mark Carliner, a movie producer who had been a Russian-history major at Princeton, appeared in Plekhanov's office. By now, Plekhanov was known to Americans as a commentator for CBS News on the Gorbachev phenomenon. Carliner asked Plekhanov to help him make a movie about Stalin, and for two years, Plekhanov was a consultant on the project. On August 15, 1991, Carliner and the director, Ivan Passer—a Czech who had been present during the 1968 Soviet invasion—and the film crew checked into the Oktyabrskaya Hotel. Four days later, the crew could observe approaching tank columns from their hotel windows.

"I was at my dacha, thirty miles from Moscow, waking up to the news," Plekhanov said. "I didn't know that the 'Stalin' crew was already there. I was thinking about my future and how awful it was going to be. It was all over." His feelings about Gorbachev had already begun to shift. "Whatever maneuvers he went through, I'd tried to justify," he said. But as Gorbachev tilted toward the right Plekhanov had become increasingly disillusioned and apprehensive. Now, in his despair, he felt that he had only one course of action: to go to Moscow alone. "I went in the White House"—the Russian Federation's parliament—"and took part in the demonstration there to protest the coup. My role was that of a foot soldier. This kind of power—that was the first time I'd felt something like that." He was, at last, part of a revolution. "It was," he reflects, "a mighty blow against Stalin."

Soon, Plekhanov was on location with "Stalin." The sets included the actual rooms in the Kremlin where Stalin had ruled, Lenin's office and apartment, and Stalin's dacha, which had never before been opened for public viewing. Plekhanov struck up a friendship with the actor Robert Duvall, who played the dictator. "Duvall was a very authentic re-

BRIEF ENCOUNTER

Of all the guys who are standing around bus shelters in Manhattan dressed in nothing but their underpants, Marky Mark is undeniably the most polite. For instance, even though he is very busy getting ready to go to Japan for a promotional tour, Marky took the time to call from Los Angeles the other day just to chat about his new role, as the Calvin Klein Underpants Boy. Heretofore, Marky has been known only as a young white rap star and the leader of Marky Mark and the Funky Bunch. Underwear has always figured in his performances, but it is only in the last few weeks that Marky has ascended to the status of lingerie luminary, and he admitted on the phone that he's still getting used to the job.



Bus-stop pin-up
Marky Mark

Marky was actually a little late in calling, but, he offered the perfect excuse: he had spent the morning at the gym doing some upper-body work, and it had taken longer than he expected. Who could begrudge him that? After all, if photographs of you nearly naked were plastered everywhere—this happens to be Marky's current situation—then upper-body work is exactly the sort of thing you would be wise not to neglect. Nonetheless, Marky was apologetic. "I'm really, really sorry," he said. "I hope I didn't screw up your day, or anything."

In the ads, which were photographed by Herb Ritts, Marky looks like a horny and impudent sixteen-year-old pleased with his pecs, his abs, and his underwear. In reality, he is twenty-one and slightly bashful. Now, about his thing. Since he was a little kid, Marky has favored gigantic pants riding very low on his hips. "I can't move around in tight pants," he said. "I've always been into the baggy thing." One night, when his brother Donnie Wahlberg, who is one of the New Kids on the Block, came to watch him perform, Marky decided to pull down his pants. "I just did it as a joke," he says. "But the crowd went crazy, and the next thing you know, it was like 'Hey, ain't you the kid who pulls his pants down?' "

Is he planning to pull his pants down in Japan?

"I don't know," he said. "I don't want to cause some mad commotion."

Just then, someone came into Marky's hotel room, and he turned away from the phone and called out, "Yo, everybody's in the crib today!" Then Marky got back on the phone and said, "I'm sorry to interrupt. That was my brother Donnie and my road manager, and they were crackin' on me because I haven't taken a bath in three days, so I'm a little greasy and I smell like a dog."

Back to pants removal. Marky has always favored Calvin Klein briefs, and earlier this year he was asked to pose in ads for the company's underwear line. The rest is bus-shelter history. "It's some crazy shit seeing the posters of me in my underwear all over the place," Marky said. "But the pictures are really me, you know?" He admitted that he'd left town right before most of the posters went up, so up to now he had missed the full effect of seeing himself in briefs at large. "I think it'll probably be cool," he said. "It's not that big a thing for me. After all, I've pulled my pants down in front of millions of people millions of times."

—SUSAN ORLEAN

ROBERT RISKO

production, like an extension of Stalin," Plekhanov said. "It was kind of scary and eerie. Duvall and I talked about Russian history. He was so anxious to learn, desperately exploring this sordid personality. He felt the pain of somebody looking into that personality, trying to find the human side. I came to the Kremlin while they were filming this big feast after V-E Day. Stalin is in his white tunic, looking every bit like the real Stalin. In the intermission, I went over to him. I said, 'Hi, Bobby.' He said, 'Hi, Sergei.' I got goose bumps. This is not Bobby. This is a ghost."

The last day of filming occurred on Stalin's birthday, December 21st, at Stalin's dacha. Just as the death scene was being staged, Plekhanov rushed in—"flushed and excited," Carliner recalls—to announce a news flash: the Soviet Union had ceased to exist. That night, a banquet of Big Macs was spread on Stalin's enormous dining-room table. It was a wrap.

A LOST ART

It always annoyed James Marshall when reviewers and publishers described his books for children as "zany." He once said, "That's a word I'd like to have wiped off every dust jacket of every book I've ever done." Marshall's attitude toward his work was never solemn or pretentious, but he knew that somehow it reached deeper than mere zaniness. Children took to his books instantly, trustingly. For parents, Marshall's books were a relief. You could read them aloud night after night without growing sick of them. The stories and pictures were simple and unashamedly goofy, but they had an acerbic wit that lingered in an adult mind.

Marshall, who died in New York several weeks ago, at the age of fifty, came to children's literature after an abortive career as a musician and an awkward interlude in which he taught Spanish—a language he didn't know—to Puerto Rican children. He illustrated his first children's book in 1970, but his genius did not announce itself until two years later, when the first volume of the incomparable George and Martha series, which was both written and illustrated by him, appeared. George and Martha are hippopotamuses—something that Marshall claimed he hadn't realized until friends pointed it out to him. He drew the creatures as hulking gray forms with tiny eyes and enormous nostrils and overbites revealing stubby tusks. Throughout the series, which runs to seven books, George and Martha's friendship is examined with an almost eerie delicacy. The two hippopotamuses routinely hurt each other's feelings and suffer the consequences of ill-considered practical jokes, but their fondness for each other always steers them away from ruin. Marshall manages to suggest the passion that binds them to each other, and the chasm of loneliness that threatens to swallow them if their union should ever fail.

Marshall's career lasted twenty years, and he was a blizzard of productivity. Of dozens of books he wrote or collaborated on, the best known is "Miss Nelson Is Missing," which he created with the writer Harry Allard. "Miss Nelson" introduced America's children to Viola Swamp, the definitive nightmare version of an elementary-school teacher. "The Stupids," another collaboration with Allard, was the opening volume of a series depicting the dim-witted strivings of a household whose members do things like wearing their socks on their ears. In later years, Marshall took on the classics, producing riotous new versions of "Little Red Riding Hood," "Hansel and Gretel," "Mother Goose," and "Goldilocks and the Three Bears." At the same time, he wrote and illustrated a series of books featuring a fox whose grand ambitions for himself are consistently undercut by the petty demands of reality. When Fox wins the part of the handsome prince in the school play, for instance, he spends so much time daydreaming about his impending stardom that he neglects to learn his lines and has to play a tree instead.

There was a streak of frustrated grandeur in Marshall. Though he was modest and self-deprecating, his ambitions were deep, and sometimes it galled him that his work didn't achieve the appreciation that he felt it deserved. He would have liked to win the distinguished Caldecott Medal, but the nervy, slightly subversive tone of his books, along with their deceptive simplicity, kept him in a critical limbo. Still, his work effortlessly found its natural audience, and certain of his characters—particularly George and Martha and Viola Swamp—are as immortal as any that a writer or artist could reasonably hope to create.

"Jim had a corner of the aesthetic market that nobody could touch," his colleague Maurice Sendak said a few days after Marshall's death. "His work was a combination of extraordinary comedy, extraordinary irony, and extraordinary graphic agility. I've been in this profession for forty years, and Jim was the best friend I ever had. What can I say more? I've never known anyone as truly generous and good-humored. I'm going to miss him terribly, because there just ain't another one."

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

"People don't know what to think of me in the States, because of the diversity of my films," Jean-Jacques Annaud said the other day, leaning back in a New York hotel room. "It might have been different if, after making 'Quest for Fire,' I had gone on to make 'Quest for Water' or 'Quest for Air.' People would have *known* what to think of me. Or if, after 'The Bear,' I had gone on to make, say, 'The Giraffe,' or 'The Elephant.' " He paused for a moment, and then smiled. "Instead, I went on to make 'The Lover.' "

"The Lover," which is the latest film of this idiosyncratic French director, is based on the Marguerite Duras novel of that name and stars the nineteen-year-old British actress Jane March. Like the novel, the film is overtly based on Duras's own life, and is about a love affair between a fifteen-year-old French girl in colonial Vietnam and an older, wealthy Chinese man who picks her up on a ferry. "The Lover" is having its American première on October 30th, but has already opened to considerable attention throughout Europe, South America, and Asia—attention enhanced, in those far-flung locales, by the hint of scandal. Annaud had a public rift with Marguerite Duras before shooting began. There was also a persistent buzz among those who had seen the film that the steamy sex scenes between March and her co-star, Tony Leung, looked—well, very real.

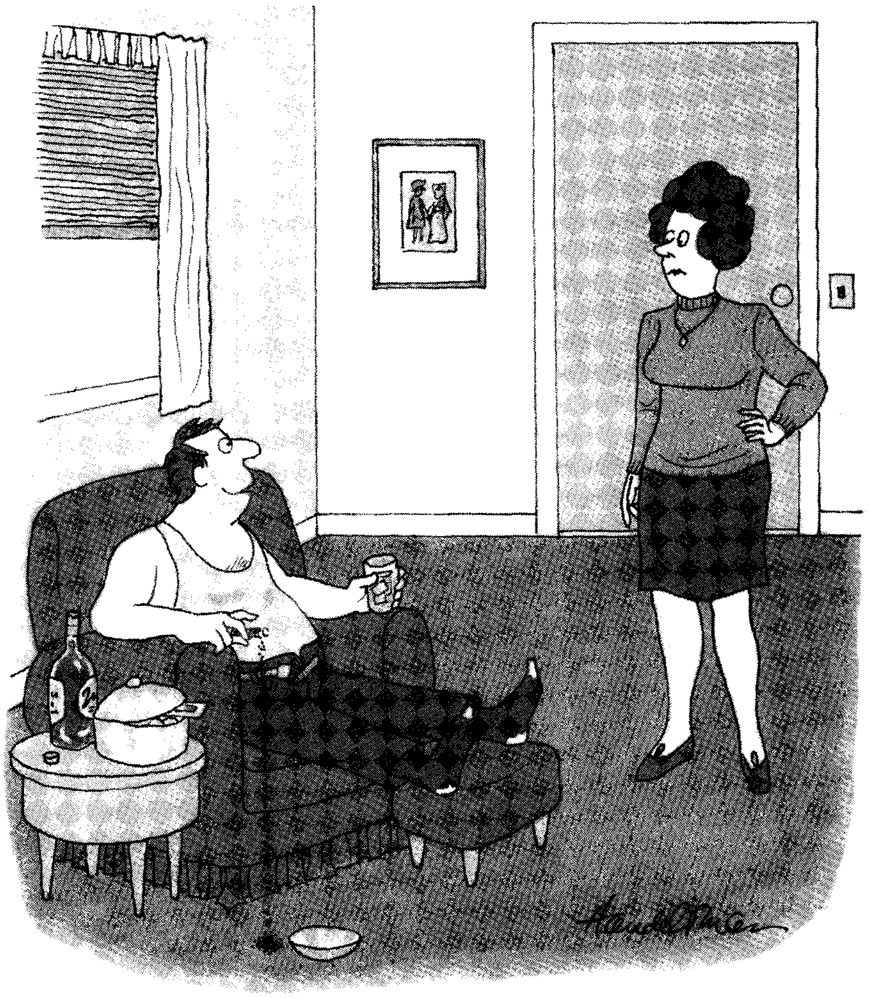
"I was at first only too happy to have Marguerite's notes and feedback," Annaud said. "In France, she is like the Louvre—a literary monument, much revered and visited. But it became increasingly clear that she wanted me to limit my vision to her ideas. And she didn't want Jane to play her as a young girl—she wanted Isabelle Adjani. I asked her, only half joking, if she wanted Adjani to play the role of the girl or her mother, and that didn't endear me, of course."

Why, then, did Mr. Annaud choose Jane March, who had never acted before a movie camera, to play the role of young Marguerite?

"During the time I was searching for my star, I subscribed to all the teen magazines, just in case," he said. "It was so discouraging. All the models looked the same—they were always smiling. But then, one day, my wife saw some photographs of Jane in an English magazine. Jane was a model at the time. She struck me immediately, because she didn't look happy—not even when she was smiling. Her face has a strong suggestion of Marguerite about the eyes. I said to my producer, 'Ask her to come to Paris. I think we've found our star.' When she came, we opened a bottle of champagne to celebrate. She had just turned seventeen."

Jane March herself, curled up on a couch and dressed completely in black, corroborated the exhilaration of that first meeting. Her face, which seems to look out from almost every frame of the film, is pale and fragile, with the slightest hint of buckteeth, and cool, almond-shaped eyes. "When I first met Jean-Jacques and he told me the story of the film, I was enthralled," she said. "He gave me the book, and I went up to the Arc de Triomphe and read it. I had never been in Paris before. I felt the same way when we went to Vietnam to do the shooting—thrilled and afraid. I had spent eight months preparing for the shooting—taking dance lessons, studying with a mime how to convey the difference between a girl and a woman. Nothing, though, could prepare me for Vietnam. We spent six months there, shooting under very difficult circumstances. We never knew, day to day, whether we would be spending the next night in a mud hut or in a hotel."

"The whole film was on Jane's shoulders," Annaud said. "She had taken no acting classes—it was a real gamble. She wasn't sure at first that she would be able to handle the pivotal scenes, like the love scenes. But she gave in front of the camera such a thrill and chill: it couldn't come from acting classes, it had to come from understanding the character."



"I didn't hear Bill Clinton say it was time for me to change."

• •

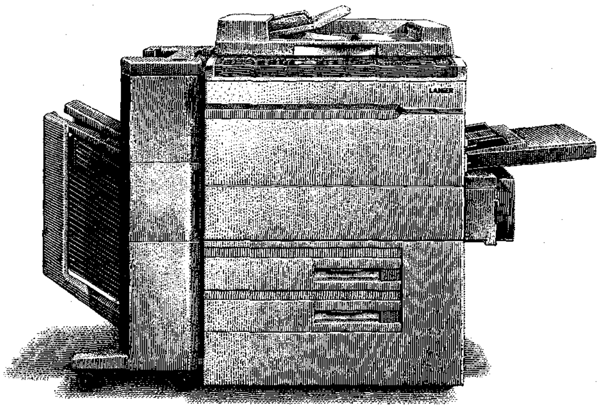
What about those notorious love scenes?

Mr. Annaud shrugged. "The scandal began in England," he said. "I was always asked the same question on British talk shows: 'We don't want to know about did she or didn't she, but *did* she?' " He laughed. "There's no way to win in a situation like that. Even when I denied that the scenes were real, the denials were never printed. You've got to realize that the principals involved are such shy people." He was quiet for a moment and then said, "I have always been interested in portraying the part of us that is instinct and physicality. I am always asking 'Where is the mammal?' and 'How is it linked with our emotions?' What fascinated me so much about this story is that it's the tale of a girl who became such a very strong woman—regarded as one of the foremost intellectual writers of her generation. And near the end of her life she tells us that the most important experience of her life was that encounter with the Chinese man in Vietnam when she was very young."

And what about that woman? What does Marguerite Duras think of Jean-Jacques Annaud's film today?

Annaud broke into a large grin. "It's so funny," he said. "If you direct a flop with your best friend, you won't speak to him afterward for years. But if you've become estranged from someone a success will bring you together again. My wife received a phone call from Marguerite one day after the movie opened. We hadn't spoken in a long time. Marguerite said, 'May I speak to Jean-Jacques?' My wife said, 'He's not here. May I take a message?' Marguerite said, 'Tell him the film is beautiful.' My wife said, getting all excited, 'Oh! You've seen the film?' And Marguerite—she'll always be the same, God bless her—said, 'No, I haven't seen the film. But tell him that he speaks very beautifully about it.' " ♦

LANIER



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JOHN MAJOR'S LAMENT

by John Mortimer

IT has been said that in his efforts to win reëlection President Bush has sought the advice, and seeks to follow the example, of the British Prime Minister. Surely their situations are somewhat similar. With elections approaching, both their countries professed themselves ready for a change, both their parties were behind in the opinion polls, both leaders were the gray and uninspiring successors of flamboyant and once revered pop idols. Both were confronted with more liberal, potentially bigger-spending and higher-taxing parties, much preferred by the chattering classes. Mr. Major, against all the odds, pulled it off. What valuable advice, therefore, could he give the American President? If he had been honest with himself and his newfound friend, as I very much doubt he was, he would have said, on one of those awful trips by golf cart at Kennebunkport, "For God's sake, George, do your very best to lose. The other path only leads to disaster and possible madness."

Consider the awful fate of John Major, brought about by his unexpected success. Before the election, he was, for some reason that will require closer examination, a popular figure—far more popular than his American counterpart is now. It's true that he had no particular achievements to his credit. He had been a Government Whip and the Chief Secretary at the Treasury. In rising to fame without trace, he had been the Foreign Secretary for what seemed about two weeks and, briefly, the Chancellor of the Exchequer. In November, 1990, when the public turned against Mrs. Thatcher, and her Cabinet organized a palace coup, Major stepped quietly into her shoes. Of the other candidates, Douglas Hurd, who had to blushingly confess that he had been to school at Eton, was considered too upper-class, and Michael Heseltine, the wild-eyed, long-haired darling of the Tory Party conferences, too flamboyant. Besides, Heseltine had openly been the first to challenge Mrs. Thatcher, and it's one of history's hardest lessons that the assassin rarely inherits the crown. It was left to the quiet Mr. Major to take advantage of the mayhem in a deft and well-timed campaign, and he became the leader of his party.

To understand how he achieved this position, it is necessary to glance at the changing face of Conservatism since the war. The old-style Tories were landowners, knights of the shires, country gents. Men like Winston Churchill and Harold Macmillan had a certain understanding of the working classes who had labored on their estates or fought in their regiments. They may have been patronizing but they didn't altogether despise the poor and would present them with tins of biscuits, pounds of tea, and blankets at Christmas. They had considerable respect for the miners, rather enjoyed the company of trades-union leaders, and would settle strikes over beer and sandwiches at No. 10 Downing Street. Of all the sorts of Conservatism we have had to contend with, there's no doubt that the old, tweedy variety was the most bearable.

It was Mrs. Thatcher's great political achievement to remove her party from the upper class and bestow it upon what the English, with their passion for such distinctions, call the lower middle. The Leader herself was the child of the proprietor of a corner shop, and her henchmen (she had almost no henchwomen) were mainly the upwardly mobile sons of working-class fathers. It was their view that all that was needed for happiness was a second car, a house with a mortgage, and an annual holiday on the Costa Brava. The poor, or those who couldn't afford such things, had fallen short of perfection by reason of some character defect. No more beer and sandwiches were served at Downing Street, and the power of the trades unions was effectively destroyed. The employed workers were quickly won over to the doctrine of material prosperity, and the *Sun*, their favorite tabloid newspaper, was given over to the beauties of Page Three pinups and the praise of Mrs. Thatcher. (On the eve of last

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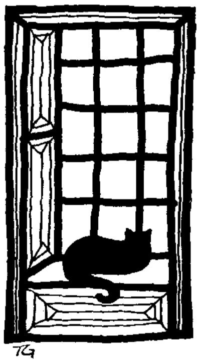
April's election, the *Sun* announced that in the event of a Labour victory the Page Three girls would become portly and unattractive.) The Leader announced that there was no such thing as society, and that you need not care about the sufferings of anyone outside your immediate family circle. In the happy days when they were able to pay their mortgages and afford their holidays abroad, a large number of people were delighted to agree with this assessment.

When the economy began to fail and the Big Bang on the Stock Exchange turned into an almost permanent whimper, the Thatcher rhetoric began to sound shrill and hollow. She became an electoral liability, and the Conservatives, with a ruthlessness unknown to the British Labour Party or the American Republicans, decided to ditch her. So Mr. Major glided into power.

Mr. Major spent his formative years working in banks, and those familiar with such things say that he was typical of the bright young men who take the coats and pass round the nuts at boardroom lunches. He was an efficient member of Lambeth Borough Council and the chairman of the Housing Committee. He was thought to be ordinary, modest, and extremely nice. After Mrs. Thatcher, whose recipe for success never included "niceness," these virtues were likely to appeal to the electorate, and at the time of the election, and for a short while afterward, they certainly did.

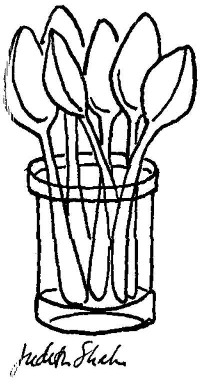
Of Mr. Major's niceness in his personal life, there can be no doubt. He is skilled at remembering many people's names, and, whether they are political friends or foes, he is relentlessly nice to them. After Mrs. Thatcher launched a devastating attack on him, he kissed her publicly on the cheek—a photo opportunity that may have been of more political than Christian significance. After the election, the defeated Labour leader, Neil Kinnock, told me that John Major had been very nice to him as they walked together to the House of Lords to hear the Queen's Speech: the Prime Minister told the Leader of the Opposition that it could have gone either way, and he knew how he'd have felt if he'd lost, so he knew just what his opponent felt, and, furthermore, he greatly admired what Mr. Kinnock had done for the Labour Party. Meeting John Major later, I told him that Neil Kinnock had been impressed with this niceness, whereupon Mr. Major told me how nice it was of Neil to have told me this story, and then how nice it was of me to recount it to him, so that he knew of Neil's niceness. Indeed, there seemed to be so much niceness about that I felt that my most cherished political beliefs might become eroded by it, and I moved rapidly to listen to someone bitching about somebody. There is no doubt, however, that it was the widely publicized picture of a nice Mr. Major that led people to hope that some much needed compassion would be added to the political program of the Conservative Party. Unhappily, such hopes did not long survive the election.



MR. BUSH is no doubt encouraged by the way the British behaved last April. They told the pollsters they wanted a change. They said they were fed up with Conservatism and they wanted a fairer and more compassionate society. When they entered the voting booths, however, they lost their nerve. Frightened by the recession, terrified of unemployment and high taxes, they decided to vote for the ills they had, rather than fly to one that they knew not of.

Basildon is a newish town in Essex, just to the north of London. Essex Man is Mr. Major's man, a middle manager wearing a blue suit and a non-regimental tie and driving a Ford Sierra. He admires Andrew Lloyd Webber, talks about cricket, and might own a Pavarotti record. (Essex Girl is said to be extremely down-market and promiscuous, but that's another story.) If Labour was to conquer, they had to capture Basildon. The returns from Basildon were among the first to be announced, and it turned out that Mr. Major had kept the loyalty of Essex Man. This is an ominous portent for Mr. Bush. If the American public suffers a similar lack of courage, he may have to carry on governing for another four years. A mere six months of this process has brought Mr. Major acute unhappiness, and denunciation by once loyal Conservative newspapers.

In a campaign commercial, Mr. Major was to be seen driving round the streets of Brixton, a section of London, where he was born and grew up. From time to time, he would call out excitedly on recognizing a house where he had once lived, or a fish shop he remembered. During the campaign, he stood on a soapbox in the street speaking to those he no doubt thought of as ordinary citizens. A few threw eggs, but large numbers felt he was being unassuming and compared him favorably with the Labour leader, who had organized glitzy events at which he was endorsed by stars of stage and screen. Now Mr. Major's popularity has sunk; ordinariness and niceness, it appears, even if supplemented by the occasional Pavarotti record, are inadequate qualities when it comes to governing a country.



The limitations of Essex Man would seem to be an inability to see beyond the next item in the order book, or the next day in the diary. The wider implications are ignored. It hasn't been realized that high unemployment not only is a tragedy but puts a whole society in danger. Industries are closed down for short-term gains, regardless of the future health of the nation. Such measures are announced with instant determination and great certainty, but within a few weeks they are changed entirely. The British are starting to doubt whether they have, in fact, any government at all. In less than a year, Mr. Major has turned from Mr. Deeds into the Invisible Man.

It is true that events, unlike the British electorate, haven't been kind to Mr. Major. His leadership campaign was orchestrated by his friends Norman Lamont, who was rewarded with the Exchequer, and David Mellor, who received the National Heritage Ministry. When Mr. Mellor achieved notoriety for an affair with a woman who was said to have starred in a soft-porn movie, Mr. Major stood by him and refused to accept his resignation. But within a few weeks, under pressure from Party members, he was no longer standing by his friend, who went, as one newspaper delicately put it, "from toe-job to no job." In the sterling crisis, Mr. Lamont appeared to produce a new policy every five minutes. First, the pound wasn't ever to be devalued, and then it was; interest rates went up twice in a morning and then came down again. Mr. Lamont's resignation has been demanded by City businessmen, and Mr. Major also has to face the opposition of senior Conservative backbenchers to his deeply unpopular decision to abandon the coal industry. Now he has been forced to do another dizzy U-turn, and reprieve a large number of miners in order to placate his own party. It's interesting to discover that one of the leading rebels is another Winston Churchill—a grandson. Perhaps the Tory wheel is turning again, and the old gents will come back to battle against shortsighted monetarism and show some concern for the workers.

At the time of the election, John Major received a fifty-three-per-cent approval rating, which had sunk, at the last check, to twenty-eight per cent. His Government's constant references to the "battle against inflation" have been called, by one newspaper, the cries of "demented parrots." Lord Jenkins, once a Labour Chancellor and now a Liberal peer, has simply decided that "Major's not up to the job," and the *Daily Telegraph*, that pillar of the Conservative Party, has called his behavior over the mines "a comedy of errors" and "sheer lunacy."

John Smith, the new Labour leader, recently referred to Mr. Major and his Chancellor Lamont as Laurel and Hardy. An incensed listener wrote to the BBC protesting that this was grossly unfair, as Laurel and Hardy were a perfectly intelligent and responsible pair. Such are the rewards of winning elections. Mr. Bush should take warning and not try too hard. ♦

CONSTABULARY NOTES FROM ALL OVER

[*From the Morro Bay* (*Calif.*) *Central Coast Sun-Bulletin*]

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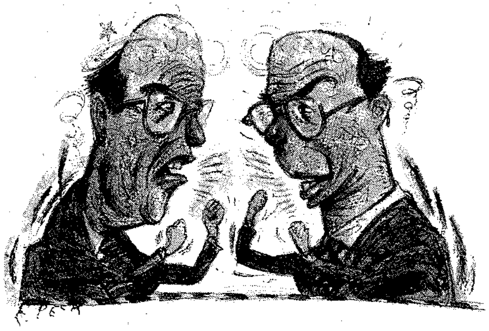
AROUND CITY HALL

SLOUCHING TOWARDS THE SENATE

by Andy Logan

Lizzie Holtzman took an axe.
She gave Geraldine forty whacks.
When Bobby Abrams saw what she had done,
He took the axe and gave her forty-one.

THESE are the poetic lines that Senator Alfonse D'Amato has been chanting lately, gleefully adapting the commemoration of a bloody event in Fall River, Massachusetts, a century ago, to a memorably grisly event in New York political history—the recent primary campaign to choose which Democrat would run against him in the general election.



Hard hitters: Robert Abrams and Alfonse D'Amato.

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The Democrats in the race were the 1984 Vice-Presidential candidate, Geraldine Ferraro; State Attorney General Robert Abrams; City Comptroller Elizabeth Holtzman; and the Reverend Al Sharpton. During the primary, Abrams and Holtzman never once went after each other (or after Sharpton, who was generally treated as a political irrelevancy who had wandered in from the day's tabloids) but concentrated their attack power on undermining the integrity of Ferraro, who until late summer had a two-digit lead in the polls. The attacks, most of which had first surfaced during her Vice-Presidential candidacy, included mentions of Italian names and numerous references to organized crime. The evident purpose of the combined onslaught—on which Abrams spent nearly four million dollars and Holtzman nearly two million—was to make sure that Abrams, and not Ferraro, was the nominee. (Holtzman, low in the polls from the start, did not have a chance, although she may not have thought of it that way.) On Primary Day, September 15th, Abrams won the nomination by a single percentage point over Ferraro; what Holtzman's huge investment bought her was last place, trailing—mortifyingly—the Reverend Al, who put his expenses at sixty thousand dollars. During a campaign debate, when the candidates were asked to say something nice about their opponents—a really hard sell—Sharpton said, "Robert Abrams has a very nice-looking family." Ferraro said that at the start she had thought of the Reverend Al as "the worst kind of person" but had come to admire him as a solid commentator on the issues. "Going to vote for me, Geraldine?" Sharpton asked. "I very well may do that," she told him. A few days after the primary, Sharpton, previously seen as a total political maverick—in 1989, for example, he had urged blacks to vote against Dinkins for mayor—turned up at a meeting of the State Democratic Committee, and the Clinton-Gore campaign was sufficiently impressed by his Primary Day showing to send him and some of his followers off on a bus tour of upstate New York last month. During his campaigning, he spoke frequently of the significance of his showing as an example of black empowerment, and reporters caught him mentioning Clinton's name exactly once.

Many of the Democrats who voted for Abrams in the primary explained that they had done so because he, unlike Ferraro, would be able to use the sleaze issue against D'Amato in the general election without fear of retaliation. Abrams' early commercials obliged them by describing (rather recklessly) his reputation for integrity as "squeaky clean." D'Amato's commercials immediately began hitting hard on the fact that the State Commission on Government Integrity had criticized Abrams for taking

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campaign contributions from donors who had business dealings with his office. It's a charge that has not been unheard in connection with D'Amato, either, as was clear in the 1991 report on him by the Senate ethics committee, which nevertheless, fraternally, let him off short of censure. By the third week of the election campaign, the nominees—both short, bald (or, in D'Amato's case, balding) middle-aged men who had grown up in modest circumstances, in, respectively, the Bronx (Abrams) and the Long Island town of Island Park (D'Amato)—were describing each other as "sleazeballs," and the tone of the campaign was turning almost as repellent as that of the primary.

A source of ugliness that the Democratic voters could have avoided by nominating Ferraro was one candidate's charging another with being anti-Italian. What they ended up with was an Italian-American candidate versus a Jewish candidate—and in this state, in the last couple of decades, Italian-Americans, who were slower to get involved in politics than many other ethnic groups, have often been elected over Jewish candidates. (In 1982, for example, Mario Cuomo beat Edward Koch for the Democratic nomination for governor and then defeated Lew Lehrman in the general election, and in 1986 D'Amato defeated Mark Green in the Senate race.) Abrams was in no position to charge D'Amato with a lack of sympathy for Israel, to whose concerns D'Amato has been so attentive that when, a few years back, he told a Long Island audience that he had just returned from "the homeland" no one was surprised to learn that he had been visiting not Rome but Tel Aviv. Some of D'Amato's early commercials this year began with citations of what were alleged to be Abrams' weaknesses, and ended with the words "Hopelessly liberal" or "Hopelessly political," in almost kidding tones—poor old Bob. Commercials that accused D'Amato's opponent of "a vicious, unethical, anti-Italian-American campaign" against Ferraro in the primary, however, were stern and angry. Some viewers were surely astonished by the spectacle of D'Amato accusing someone else of a lack of political ethics, and others, with long memories, were bound to be amazed at the charge of viciousness from a candidate who in the 1980 Republican primary, in which he was challenging the revered veteran Senator Jacob Javits, ran commercials predicting that Javits was too old and sick to finish a new term, and featuring a photograph that Javits complained had been "phonied up . . . to make me look like I'm dying." D'Amato's comment was "Actually, in life he looks worse than the picture." The commercials that year, when D'Amato won his first senatorial victory, were prepared by Arthur Finkelstein, and he is also the political consultant in this year's D'Amato campaign.

Though D'Amato's complaint that Abrams had been guilty of an "ethnic slur" against Ferraro might have swayed some Italian-American voters, what happened on October 11th was a truly marvellous break for the incumbent senator. In his campaigns for attorney general, Abrams had had little opposition, and he was apparently unnerved by some heckling he encountered at a students' rally in upstate Binghamton, where a handful of D'Amato supporters honked their car horns and tried to drown him out. Abrams denounced D'Amato for sending the small band of tormentors, and called the Senator "a fascist." The term is thrown about fairly casually by some liberals when they are discussing right-wing Republicans, but among Italian-Americans it has a strong resonance—and, in case it didn't, D'Amato instantly began reminding the registered voters among them that an outrage had been committed. At the Columbus Day parade the next day, he seemed to be gulping back sobs as he spoke of the hurt that being called a fascist had caused him. Footage showing Mussolini on a balcony haranguing a crowd was inserted in a D'Amato commercial to remind voters of what Abrams had compared him to. D'Amato's challenger had been so irritated by the events in Binghamton that he had also compared D'Amato to Joseph Goebbels, the legendary teller of the Big Lie.

Three days after the "fascist" charge, a group of prominent feminists came to City Hall to endorse Abrams. Bella Abzug said that the characterization was appropriate, Betty Friedan concurred, and Gloria Steinem, noting that D'Amato opposes abortion except in cases of rape or incest, was reminded

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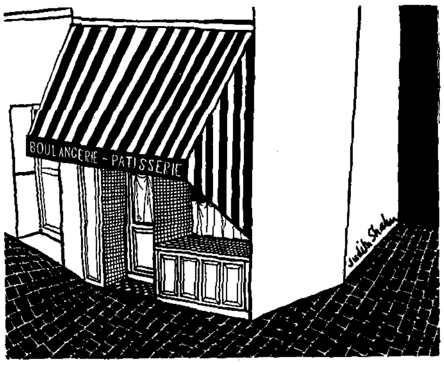
that one of the first actions of Hitler's new government in 1933 was to shut down family-planning clinics. No one, of course, apologized to any Nazis for the comments of Abrams and others. Abrams apologized to "Italian-Americans for the fascist charge," but he declined to apologize to D'Amato until the Senator apologized to *him* for his "lies and distortions" on other matters. Four days after the "fascist" charge, Abrams did apologize to D'Amato, at the urging of Governor Cuomo, who, as has been mentioned, shares with D'Amato "this nice conjunction of vowels in his name." That week, D'Amato endorsed a suggestion by Clinton that Cuomo would be a fine appointment to the Supreme Court. At almost every campaign stop, the Senator—quite unlike Sharpton—spoke favorably of Clinton; the name of Bush, insofar as reporters travelling with him could remember, never passed his lips. At least one Clinton aide did not respond with gratitude for the Senator's favorable references. "I think it is unseemly," said Deborah Sale, whose real-life job is with the Cuomo administration, in Albany. "Al D'Amato is a Republican. Just because George Bush is doing poorly is no reason for the rats to leave the sinking ship." Meanwhile, in the Senate campaign, five and a half weeks after Primary Day the blood from the primary was still so fresh on the floor that, although they might get around to it, neither Ferraro nor Sharpton had endorsed Abrams.

WHAT to many New Yorkers may be the most memorable local event this year took place on September 16th. Ten thousand local off-duty policemen, marshalled by their union, the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, demonstrated at City Hall, exercising their lawful right to protest against a proposed revision of the Civilian Complaint Review Board, with which citizens file complaints of insulting or physically brutal behavior by members of the Police Department. The revision had been proposed by Mayor David Dinkins—whom the P.B.A. had opposed in the 1989 mayoral primary—and eighteen members of the City Council, many of them black and Latino. In one sense, the revision represented a logical government adjustment to the fact that the local population is now forty-three per cent non-Latino white, while the police force is nearly seventy-five per cent white. Latinos and blacks account for about a quarter of New Yorkers each, but black representation on the force is only eleven and a half per cent—the lowest percentage in any of the nation's fifty largest cities. This circumstance exists despite the fact that New York has had a black mayor for nearly three years and two successive black police commissioners. (The second, Lee Brown, resigned on August 3rd, because of family illness.) Most of those filing complaints with the review board are black or Hispanic; most of the cops whose behavior is complained of are white. Only two per cent of the complaints are routinely substantiated by investigators, all of whom are either police officers or employees of the Police Department; among the proposed changes in the C.C.R.B. was the hiring of outside investigators.

About four thousand of the P.B.A. members who swarmed outside City Hall on September 16th knocked down barriers and stormed up the City Hall steps toward the front doors of the local seat of government, which had to be locked against them, while others halted traffic on the Brooklyn Bridge for nearly an hour. It was clear that the central target of their wrath was Dinkins. Chants and signs mentioned the color of his skin; some were obscene. A report by Acting Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly, helped by videos of the marauding—and sometimes drunken—policemen made by local television stations, identified eighty-seven, and departmental charges have been filed against forty-two.

Besides causing individual career setbacks, the rally turned out poorly for P.B.A. purposes. In the ordinary course of events, the Mayor's bill to revise the C.C.R.B. would never have passed the Council; the votes of twenty-six out of fifty-one Council members were needed, and Speaker Peter Vallone, who runs the Council with a steely hand, opposed it. However, the storming of City Hall angered him, and many of his Queens constituents as well, and he announced that he would see that the C.C.R.B. was revised after all, although he and the Mayor are still squabbling over the powers of appointment to the board. Vallone also said that he now favored a residency law for new cops—a measure long advocated by Dinkins. By department count, forty-two per cent of the members of the police force now live outside the city, and twelve per cent live on Staten Island, the most suburblike of the boroughs. Thus, at the end of a tour, well over half the members of the police force leave the dingy city streets for far greener worlds, from which they then return, some local residents complain, like a hostile occupying army.



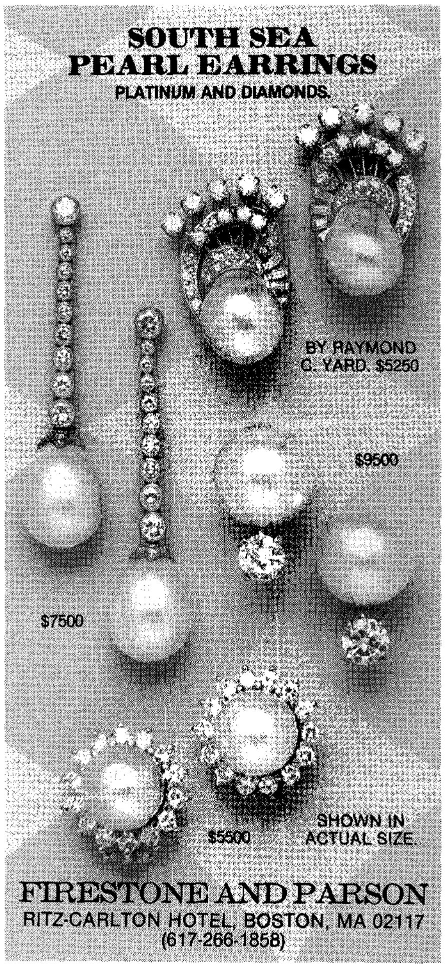
Among those addressing the P.B.A. troops on September 16th (egging them on, in Dinkins' view) were Borough President Guy Molinari, of Staten Island, who is the only Republican borough president, and former United States Attorney General Rudolph Giuliani, whose almost successful mayoral campaign against Dinkins, in 1989, was directed by Molinari. Speaking through a bullhorn, Giuliani jeered at Dinkins' claim of having the Police Department's well-being at heart, causing Deputy Mayor Bill Lynch to go on a black radio station and compare Giuliani, who is an all-but-announced candidate against Dinkins in the 1993 mayoral race, to David Duke. For good measure, the Mayor's friends at Harlem's *Amsterdam News* called not only Molinari and Giuliani but the P.B.A. president, Phil Caruso, "Mussolini-style" fascists. The Coalition of Italo-American Associations then complained that the three men were being branded with "an anti-Italian stereotype." At an October 15th City Council hearing on the C.C.R.B. bill, black supporters of the legislation interrupted Susan Molinari, Guy Molinari's daughter and a member of the city's delegation in the House of Representatives, to shout, "Mafia woman!" It seemed clear that this would not be the season when Rodney King's question after last spring's riots in Los Angeles—"People . . . can we all get along?"—was answered in the affirmative here.

THOUGH the election that counts most for people right now is the one for the Presidency, much of the political attention in New York has moved on to the question of who will be elected mayor a year from now—a question that already has an influence on nearly everything that happens in local government. Giuliani's attacks on Dinkins during the P.B.A. near-riot at City Hall seemed intended to make sure that Dinkins did not improve his standing with the city's white voters, only twenty-seven per cent of whom supported him in 1989. (He got ninety-one per cent of the black vote—not enough, however, to elect a mayor.) And it was essential that Dinkins appoint a new police commissioner as soon as possible, to ease his unsettled relationship with what is widely regarded as the politically powerful P.B.A. At the press conference at which the impending departure of Lee Brown was announced, a reporter asked Dinkins if Brown's successor would be black. The Mayor said that this would not necessarily be the case, and the reporter asked, referring to a possible white appointee (after two successive black commissioners), "Wouldn't that be a step backward?" Jimmy Breslin was so incensed by this view that he announced that the matter was settled: the new man had to be a fellow named Kelly. When the Mayor named a new commissioner, on October 16th, it was, in fact, Raymond Kelly, who had been the acting commissioner since Brown left. Naming Kelly was in keeping with the department's history. Nearly all the heads of the department in this century have been Irish. The appointment was praised by the P.B.A., since Kelly was a highly respected member of the department who had come up through the ranks, and also seemed to meet the approval of the majority of cops, including some blacks. He immediately announced that his first priority would be recruiting more minority members, noting that there had been no recent progress: the percentage of blacks had been the same for nine years. He also promised that there would be more Hispanic officers, along with "aggressive recruiting, so that the department more accurately reflects the ethnic makeup of the communities we serve." The P.B.A. reminded him that his first priority was fighting crime.

There has also been what some interpreted as movement on the Giuliani mayoral front. The relationship between the men who are probably the two most prominent Republicans here, D'Amato and Giuliani, has been poor. In 1989, D'Amato backed Ronald Lauder, who was running against Giuliani in the Republican mayoral primary, and who spent fourteen million dollars on commercials savagely attacking Giuliani—commercials that, Giuliani was convinced (probably correctly), caused his narrow loss to Dinkins in the general election. Last month, however, Giuliani announced that Abrams' calling D'Amato "a fascist" had so outraged him that he was endorsing the Senator for reëlection. There was a suspicion that this move involved a trade-off: D'Amato could now be counted on to back Giuliani for mayor next year.

A third man who obviously plans to be in the mayoral race next year is Andrew Stein, president of the City Council, who defeated Dinkins in 1977 and 1981 in contests for the Manhattan borough presidency. When some criticism of the Dinkins administration by either Giuliani or Stein is mentioned at a City Hall press conference, the Mayor often comments, in ice-cold tones, "Oh, you mean the *candidate*"—implying that criticism should be evaluated in the light of each man's political aspirations. On that theory, however, any mayoral statements should be given equally cynical interpretation, since Dinkins has said he will be running for reëlection. It is always possible, of course, that this rather tiresome three-way show, which for the moment promises to be running for the next twelve months, will get a shaking up: someone who has never before run against Dinkins for anything might decide it is worthwhile to make a pitch to preside over the nation's largest city and its twenty-nine-billion-dollar annual budget. After all, the commercials for the state lottery, which urge listeners to invest their paychecks on the chance that they might hit it big, conclude with the words "Hey—you never know!"

AROUND the middle of last month, the Mayor's office put out the word that Deputy Mayor Lynch, who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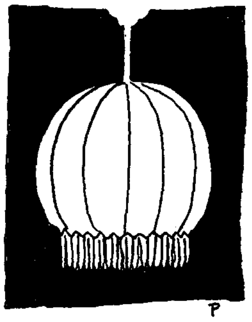
had taken a leave to work on the Clinton campaign, would not be coming back to City Hall but would move directly into the 1993 municipal-election mode, serving as campaign manager for Dinkins, the same role he had filled four years earlier. On October 15th, it was announced at a City Hall press conference that Dinkins' new deputy mayor (he has five others) would be Randy Daniels, and his title would be Deputy Mayor for Public and Community Affairs. When Daniels, who, like Lynch, is black, was asked what his duties would be, he said, "I consider myself a front-line soldier in the effort to give David Dinkins a second term." Since his hundred-and-twelve-thousand-dollar annual salary would be paid by the city treasury, Daniels' announcement seemed to reflect an attitude toward public funds which some might see as bordering on larceny. But then it was the turn of the Mayor, who had smiled benignly at Daniels through the session, to get lucky. On October 19th, Stein announced that he had hired Elizabeth Colon, a prominent Latino politician, as his chief of policy. She would undoubtedly be helpful in maintaining Stein's close ties to the local Latino community, and, in a mayoral race whose candidates (so far) are of Jewish, Italian-American, and African-American heritage, the Latino vote will be crucial. Although Stein already had a highly paid Latino adviser, and his office had few responsibilities, Colon would be paid ninety-three thousand dollars a year in city funds. Running for office is expensive—especially, it was becoming clear, for the taxpayers.



In a column published in the *Post* the same day the Colon appointment was announced, Mike McAlary delved further into the career background of Daniels, who has been an itinerant public-relations adviser to a number of public figures, including former Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young and (an odd credential for a Dinkins appointee) Andrew Stein. For the last four years, he had been the chief press spokesman for Sir Lynden Pindling, the prime minister of the Bahamas—a job that, as McAlary's column two days later described it, entailed defending Pindling against charges that he was "an international cocaine trafficker, a drug dealer in the same class with Manuel Noriega." A close reading of the text revealed that although Pindling's name had indeed been mentioned in a number of international drug trials, he had never been indicted, let alone convicted, on such charges—nor, of course, had his press spokesman. The *Post* headline that day, "DEPUTY DOPE," was surely stretching matters. Dinkins said he saw no reason for any doubts about his latest appointment.

Having one's name publicly linked with drug dealing might seem to be almost the worst possible charge that could be made against a public official, but on October 22nd a McAlary column came up with a bombshell that in the days before the Anita Hill–Clarence Thomas hearings might have been covered in a small story at the bottom of a page. A young black television reporter who had worked with Daniels in Andrew Stein's office accused him of sexually harassing her in graphic verbal terms, and of threatening that she would have no future in the media business if she did not comply with his sexual wishes. Her uncle, a well-known television reporter, had gone to Stein and complained, and Daniels had left the office eight months afterward. On all the facts, including the sexual-harassment charge, the principals, predictably, disagreed. Stein, who surely did not want to enter a mayoral race bearing the brand of a man insufficiently opposed to sexual harassment, said that he had acted decisively against Daniels, whom he called "a liar," and had not, as Daniels claimed, asked him to stay, and become Stein's chief of staff. Dinkins did not call Daniels a liar, and, indeed, seemed delighted to repeat several of his statements about Stein's apparently indulgent attitude in the case. On the day of McAlary's latest revelations, Daniels flew up from the Bahamas and held a press conference, at which he said the allegations "have come from people with blind ambition and a lust for power. Ladies and gentlemen, the mayoral race has begun." The accusations, intended to embarrass Dinkins, he said, had Stein's fingerprints all over them. In case there was any doubt that much of the coming mayoral campaign would turn on the matter of race, Daniels held his press conference not at City Hall or any other downtown or midtown gathering place but at the Abyssinian Baptist Church, in Harlem—Adam Clayton Powell, Jr.'s old church. The present pastor, the Reverend Calvin Butts, who, after the P.B.A. charge on City Hall, had compared the cops to Nazi Storm Troopers, said he had no doubt that it was Daniels who was telling the truth. Finally, late on October 22nd, Dinkins said that the city's Department of Investigation could sort the matter out.

Not all the sounds were grim or angry in the city these last weeks. The belief of many Native Americans that Columbus is one of history's monsters caused the cancellation of the Columbus Day parade in some places for fear of confrontation, but not here, in what is often thought of as confrontation city. The day of the parade up Fifth Avenue was sunny, and the turnout of spectators—at least fifty thousand—was high. The Italian-Americans among them seemed especially eager to clasp arms in this season when they had been targets of political bashing. Fortunately, Abrams, whose presence might have been the signal for a certain amount of ugliness, prudently—or, some said, cravenly—discovered campaign responsibilities elsewhere in the state. Dinkins and Stein were among those who marched, as well as politicians with the nice conjunction of vowels in their names—including Cuomo, Giuliani, Ferraro, and D'Amato. Sophia Loren was the grand marshal, and before the parade she and some of the other dignitaries released a flock of white doves in front of the reviewing stand at Sixty-ninth Street, as a gesture symbolizing peace, unity, and brotherhood. Hey, you never know! ♦

DEPT. OF AESTHETIC REVISIONISM

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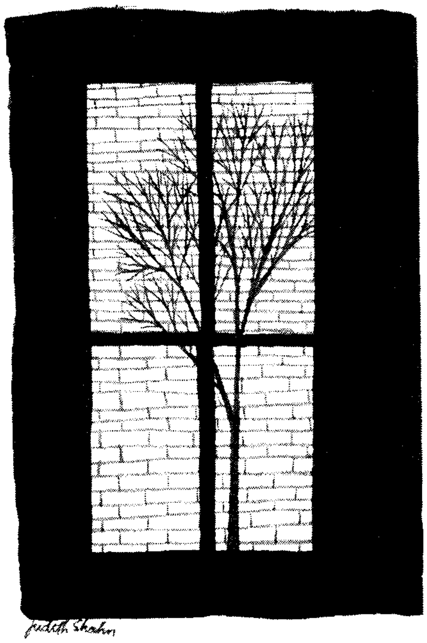
THE SKY LINE

ON ASTOR ROW

by Brendan Gill

A BLOCK in an uptown neighborhood has taken me by surprise: nobody had prepared me for the air of old-fashioned domestic tranquillity in which it appears to drowse. From somewhere on the block come the steely *ping* of a carpenter's hammer, the *zzz* of a saw, but the sounds are hushed, as if they were softened as much by time as by distance. I stand gazing at a row of hundred-year-old houses that might be found in a small town on the Ohio River, or in a mill town in Maine. Instead, bewilderingly, here they stand in the very heart of burned-out Harlem. Because the houses on this block—West 130th Street between Fifth Avenue and Lenox Avenue—are for the most part low-roofed, there is a welcome amplitude of sky, and the sun pours its light into the middle of the street with a force that the houses on the block seem to shrink back from in genteel dismay, as from an unaccustomed vehemence.



The street is well planted with trees. From where I stand—at the eastern end of the block, across from the granite-walled Victorian Gothic pile of St. Ambrose Episcopal Church—I am able to glance along a stretch of well-swept sidewalk for a distance of several hundred feet, much of it in the shade of flourishing maples and ginkgoes. During these first weeks of autumn, the leaves on the trees are turning color and beginning to fall. (In the days before leaf burning was prohibited by law as a hazard to health, the air would have been filled with the delicious smell of bonfires of dead leaves, through which boys would have been pedalling their bikes at high speed, stirring up smoke and flame. Nowadays, dead leaves must be gathered up into plastic bags and left at the curb, to be collected by the Department of Sanitation.)

As I walk along the street, I become aware of an oddity in the architecture of the buildings that look out upon it. The north side of the street consists mostly of nineteenth-century brownstone row houses, with high front stoops and an occasional dormered mansard roof. But on the south side of the street there are only small, square, three-story red brick houses with painted wooden porches. The brownstones on the north side reach to the edge of the sidewalk; the little red brick houses on the south side, grouped two by two, have space in front of them for gardens, and are separated from the street by low fences of decorative cast iron. Unclipped privet hedges curve out over the sidewalk, some of them with trunks as thick as a man's arm; in one yard blooms a single dazzlingly yellow rose.

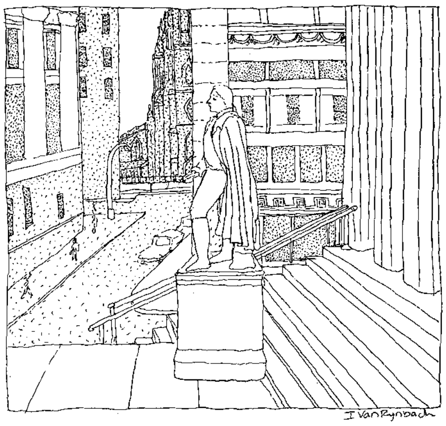
The stone lintels above the windows of these twinned brick houses have playful abstract curlicues cut into them, in what was known a century ago as the Neo-Grec style. The French term implies, correctly, that the style was imported from abroad and had more to do with an architectural fashion than with its place of origin; it is a style, one might say, more chic than Greek. The architect of the houses was a man named Charles Buek, who designed many mansions on the Upper East Side and on Riverside Drive. No doubt Buek was happy to take advantage of this Parisian vogue when, between 1880 and 1883, he was commissioned—presumably by the owner of the land, William Astor, whose grandfather, John Jacob Astor, had bought it in 1844—to design the houses on what has been known ever since as Astor Row.

The shock of pleasure I felt on leaving the hubbub of traffic on Fifth Avenue for the pastoral quietude of 130th Street led me to ignore, at first, the perilous physical condition of much of the row. I see that many of the houses are derelict—their wooden porches twisted and about to collapse, their windows smashed in or crudely replaced with concrete blocks, their brick chimney tops broken off. It had been too much to hope that Astor Row could escape the deterioration that has afflicted so much of Harlem as more and more of the area, abandoned by its owners, has come into the possession of the city.

This process of deterioration has been under way at an ever-accelerating rate for more than a quarter of a century; today, something like sixty per cent of the buildings in the great plain of Harlem, stretching northward from 110th Street to the Harlem River, is held by one or another of several city agencies, which, being themselves held in check by an impoverished administration, are hard-pressed to deal with this rising tide of ruin. (In former times, the name Harlem referred only to the plain; now it conventionally extends to parts of the rocky escarpments along the Hudson that include Hamilton Heights and Washington Heights.) Ironically, the houses that are giving way to ruin were once among the sturdiest and most sought-after in the city, but now, with their roofs caving in, rain and snow dribble down from floor to floor into the darkness of their rotted, rat-infested cellars.

WHEN the Astor Row houses were being built, Harlem was a residential village where prosperous middle-class white businessmen and professionals chose to settle their families in order to escape the costly hurly-burly of downtown New York. The village had been founded by seventeenth-century Dutchmen as an outpost of Nieuw Amsterdam, at the southern tip of Manhattan; when the British defeated the Dutch, in 1664, and Nieuw Amsterdam was renamed New York, insignificant little Nieuw Haarlem was allowed to retain the patronymic it had inherited from old Haarlem, across the sea. The village had a serviceable small harbor on the East River and (near where 125th Street is now) a valley that led westward all the way to the banks of the Hudson, and for a century or more its rich alluvial plain was filled with farms. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, with the coming of elevated railroads and, later, subways, a speculative-building boom overran and swallowed up the area. The boom was followed by a crash in the first decade of this century—an event that provided the opportunity for a successful black real-estate operator, Philip Payton, to inaugurate a major shift in the housing of the city's black population.

At the turn of the century, the largest community of blacks in New York City lived in the densely built-up tenement district of the West Thirties. Several square blocks in that district were about to be demolished to make way for the construction of Pennsylvania Station and the tunnel that would connect the station to the railroad lines on the Jersey shore. Where were the blacks huddled in the tenements to go? Payton had a ready answer. Shrewdly, he had acquired, on the cheap, scores of five-year leases on houses in Harlem that were being abandoned by their financially embarrassed white owners. He offered these leases to black families who might otherwise have found themselves homeless. By 1914, more than fifty thousand blacks had taken up residence in Harlem, and an equivalent number of whites had hastily made their way farther north, most of them into the suburbs. A majority of the newly arrived blacks were paying rent, but an increasing proportion of them contrived to buy property and become landlords in their own right—manifesting, by all accounts, every bit as hardboiled an attitude toward their tenants as their own former white landlords had done.



The nineteen-twenties became the glory days of Harlem. Black writers, artists, composers, and theatre performers were thought to be opening the door to a promising future—one that could be shared with a white majority only just beginning to perceive black culture not as a form of failed white culture but as something that had its own complex nature. Successful blacks lived on "Strivers Row" (a couple of blocks of houses on West 138th and 139th Streets that had been built a few years after Astor Row), or on "Sugar Hill" (a group of apartment buildings perched on the slope of Edgecombe Avenue and looking down over the crowded Harlem plain). Among the celebrated figures who lived on Sugar Hill in its heyday were Duke Ellington, Thurgood Marshall, Langston Hughes, and Roy Wilkins.

The Depression brought the Harlem Renaissance to an abrupt end. Then, after the Second World War, the black population kept increasing, with waves of immigration not only from the American South but from the Caribbean Islands as well, and there were never as many entry-level jobs as there were newcomers. Meanwhile, the cost of keeping up a property—taxes, mortgage payments, fire insurance, water bills, the inescapable round of repairs—kept rising, while rents remained controlled by law, at an increasingly unprofitable level. Many Harlem landlords, and even some ordinary homeowners, took to burning down their properties in order to collect fire insurance; others, having mortgaged their properties to the limit, simply walked away from them, leaving them prey to vandalism and decay.

With increasing reluctance, in the past decade or so the city has been taking over thousands of properties for nonpayment of taxes, using a legal action known for short as "in rem." It has also launched half a dozen programs intended to repair and improve the many houses, tenements, and apartment buildings that have come into its possession, but the amount of money required to carry out these programs—an amount greatly increased by an almost total lack of federal funding—combined with the effects of a recession that appears to be worsening here from month to month, has proved an insurmountable stumbling block. Whenever the problems of housing in New York City come under discussion, the metaphor of incurable cancer is apt to be heard. Nevertheless, a handful of people familiar with the problems are quick to reject the metaphor; they argue that the provision of adequate housing here has been a challenge for officials and private citizens since Peter Stuyvesant's day, and that repeated evidences of failure, however vexatious, ought not to imply the impossibility of success. Nowadays, in defense of their argument, these people often point to what is happening on Astor Row.

For the past two years, a number of interested parties have been engaged in restoring the block to its original appearance, and also providing its houses with amenities—plumbing, heating, electricity, and the like—that were either rudimentary or nonexistent when the houses were built. The block is an experiment that, if it proves successful, might serve as a model for other blighted residential areas of the city. Like almost any new urban experiment, this one is costly, and its sponsors acknowledge that only those aspects of it which are capable of being repeated in similar neighborhoods at normal market prices will prove of use in the long run. But Astor Row is not the extravagant gesture—the plaything—of warmhearted but unrealistic do-gooders. On the contrary, the members of the informal consortium that is funding the restoration of the row are accustomed to scrutinizing budgets and making sure (in a way that would doubtless have pleased canny old John Jacob Astor) that every penny counts. Among the members of the consortium are the Landmarks Conservancy, the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Vincent Astor Foundation, Community Board 10, the Abyssinian Development Corporation, the Commonwealth Fund, the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and a number of local banks.

On the day of my visit to Astor Row, I am to be shown about by Karen Ansis, a member of the staff of the Landmarks Conservancy and the chief coördinator of the project. Ms. Ansis greets me at the appointed hour outside one of the more woebegone of the houses now undergoing restoration. Behind a makeshift chain-link fence, unpainted two-by-fours hold up one end of the porch roof, and it may be that the missing pillars, like so much else that is combustible in the neighborhood, were long since put to use as firewood by homeless people seeking to warm themselves during the cold winter months. "There are twenty-eight houses in the project, all of which have been designated historic landmarks by the Landmarks Preservation Commission," Ms. Ansis tells me. "So far, the Conservancy has raised just over a million and a half dollars from private and public sources, to be applied to restoration of the entire row."

The restoration is being carried out under the supervision of the Conservancy. The largest grant—five hundred thousand dollars—has come from the Vincent Astor Foundation. (Vincent Astor, who died in 1959, was the great-great-grandson of John Jacob Astor.) The New York State Department of Housing and Community Renewal has allotted four hundred thousand dollars to the Conservancy and to the Abyssinian Development Corporation, an affiliate of the Abyssinian Baptist Church, for the conversion of two of the abandoned buildings into small coöperative apartments, to be sold to lower- and middle-income residents. The Commonwealth Fund has donated a hundred and fifty thousand dollars toward the rebuilding of roofs, and the Façade Improvement Program of the Landmarks Preservation Commission has made a grant of seventy-five thousand dollars for the cleaning and repointing of the brick façades of five of the houses. Finally, well over three hundred thousand dollars in loans has been provided by a division of the Conservancy which is called the New York City Historic Properties Fund—a revolving fund that lends money at exceptionally favorable rates of interest (in this instance, three per cent) to owners of properties of architectural or historic importance. Many such owners, especially in areas that have been openly or covertly "red-lined" by banks, do not ordinarily qualify for bank loans or mortgages, and even when they do succeed in obtaining such loans or mortgages they are usually obliged to fall back upon "sweat equity"—that is, upon their own labor—to complete the restoration of their properties.

Ms. Ansis informs me that the

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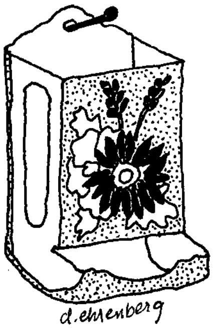
shabby house we are standing in front of belongs to a longtime resident of upper Manhattan named Ed Phillips, and that he bought it in 1989. Phillips, who is a free-lance plumber, has been restoring the interior of the house ever since; when he has finished the job, the house will have six apartment units, and he will live in one of them. With the aid of some intricate financing devised by the Landmarks Conservancy, Phillips hopes to tackle the exterior of the building soon. He has told Ms. Ansis that he estimates that, from start to finish, the project will cost over a hundred and fifty thousand dollars in labor and materials.

Of the twenty-seven other houses in the row, four are owned by the city, two are owned by the Mt. Calvary Pentecostal Faith Church, which has been constructing an immense, block-long headquarters building on Lenox Avenue between 129th and 130th Streets (construction has come to a temporary halt for the usual reason: the congregation has run out of money), and the rest are in private hands. Almost half of the privately owned houses are listed on the tax rolls as "S.R.O.," which, of course, stands in this case not for "standing room only" but for "single-room occupancy." The work on Astor Row is not likely to be completed before the end of the decade.

We stop in front of one of just four houses on Astor Row whose exteriors have been fully restored. The brick façades have been stripped of generations of muddy dark-red paint, and their porches boast new redwood floors and accurate replicas of the slender wooden posts and pretty fretwork with which they were originally adorned. The hammering and sawing I heard on entering the block came from the interiors of these houses; now I can see carpenters moving briskly back and forth behind the open windows, and there is a smell of fresh sawdust in the air.



A week or so before my visit, Mayor Dinkins and Brooke Astor, the president of the Vincent Astor Foundation, held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of this first stage of the project. The ceremony took place on one of the restored front porches. An audience of perhaps a hundred dignitaries, workers, neighbors, and children from a nearby school sat on folding chairs in front of the houses or stood at ease in the street, which had been closed for the occasion. Besides the Mayor and Mrs. Astor, speakers included the Borough President, Ruth Messinger; the chairman of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, Laurie Beckelman; the president of the Landmarks Conservancy, Susan Henshaw Jones; and Lars Westvind, a Swedish artist, who is at the moment the only white person living on Astor Row. Praise was bestowed on the architect of the project, Roberta Washington; on the contractor, John Robinson; and on Ms. Eloise Calloway, who has owned a house on the row for over twenty years and has set a standard of old-fashioned domestic orderliness which new residents are expected to emulate.

Today, Ms. Ansis leads me along the street to Ms. Calloway's house, at the Lenox Avenue end of the block. Ms. Calloway, a small woman wearing gold-rimmed spectacles, is seated on her front porch enjoying the fine fall weather. She is happy to speak of the ceremony she shared with the Mayor and Mrs. Astor. "My, but she had such nice things to say about porches!" Ms. Calloway exclaims, referring to Mrs. Astor. "Coming from the South—Washington, D.C.—that's how she knows. Knows that just sitting on a porch and talking back and forth to the folks next door makes good neighbors. In front of all those people, into a *microphone*, she came right out and said she was ninety years old! And then didn't she turn to me and ask me how old *I* was! Embarrassed me near to death. I'm a few years behind her, but I don't *talk* about my age—not yet, I don't. So I just whispered it to her, behind my hand, like this"—Ms. Calloway cupped her hand in front of her mouth—"and I guess she caught on well enough. She came along here and looked around my parlor and dining room, at all my nice things, and she couldn't get over the books. Books everywhere, the way I've always liked to have them. And she says, 'Ms. Calloway, I wish I could sit down here in your parlor and read these books of yours all day long,' and so I said, 'Mrs. Astor, you're welcome to come and do so any time you please.' " ♦

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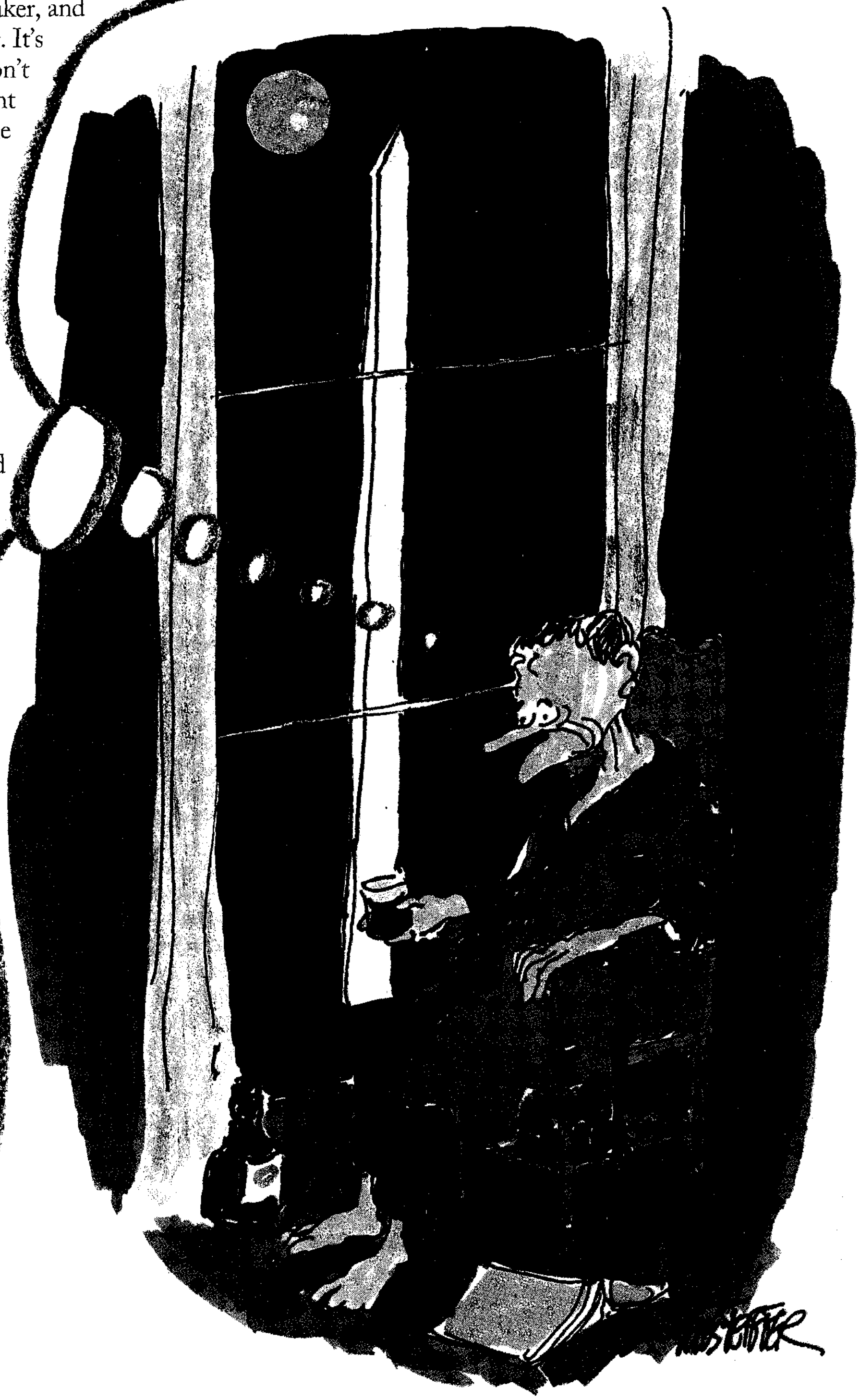
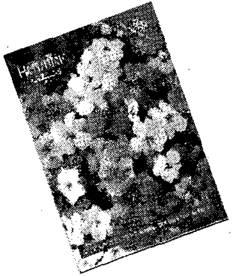
NIGHTWHINE

by Jules Feiffer

Don't whine. Important thing, whatever happens, don't whine. I think I can win this. Scratch "think"! I *know!* I know I can win this. Will. Who's got the will? I got the will. Sure, *he's* got the will, too, but more than I do? Good question. Worth pondering. The one who wins is the one with more will. Him or me? Good question. Four years ago, no question—me! I kicked butt four years ago. I laid waste! That little pansy never knew what hit him. Atwater, Baker, and me. Now Atwater's dead, Baker's in hiding. It's down to me. Don't whine. Baker sucks! Don't whine, Baker's O.K. Love the guy. I thought he loved me. Concede, but don't whine. The defining moment of my retirement—my concession speech! This one has to work. Has to lay the groundwork. Has to kick out the jams. But with dignity. Mature, statesmanlike. "What have we done?" people will say. "What a mistake!" Like Washington's farewell. Eisenhower's. They want vision? Vision up the kazoo! And more! What they've lost. A defining concession. Bar standing by. Lost. The grandchildren. Photo op. Me, Bar, kids, and grandkids, including the little brown ones, right up front. A defining photo op. Huh? Huh? Then six months of travel. R. and R. Statesmanlike. The elder statesman, who better qualified? The book—memoir—serial-rights thing. Yeah. The Bush Library. Yeah. The comeback. Stay close to Baker, get in close to Kemp, mend fences with the evangelicals, restore trust with the right-wing nut cases. Then, four years down the road, "Bush wasn't so bad." "Man made a lotta sense." "The most underrated President since—since—since—Harry Truman. The most underrated President of the century! In history!" The revisionist thing. '96 race: Kemp? Baker? No matter, I'm their man. A new acceptance. They'll need *me*. A new Administration. First important announcement: Who's the first former President to be named Secretary of State? Gotcha! One for the books! Outlast the sons of bitches. Defining. Damn well defining. Make a note. Lunch with Nixon November 4th. Get some tips.





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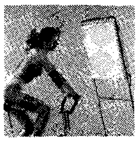

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LETTER FROM WASHINGTON

ENDGAME

by Elizabeth Drew

OCTOBER 22

THIS election has turned out to be different from what was expected when it began about a year and a half ago: the electorate is engaged, the issues are real, and it has certainly been no cakewalk for the incumbent President. Yet, despite George Bush's problems, as Bill Clinton headed into the final two and a half weeks with a fairly comfortable lead, his advisers were, as one of them put it, "scared to death." The prospect of victory is so overwhelming, and victory is so close at hand, that the possibility of, as this person put it, "blowing it" is terrifying. Besides, the voters have shown this year a capacity for upending the polls overnight. Going into the final weeks, the Bush people were divided between those who had virtually given up and those who refused to concede that Bush couldn't still possibly win. Some Bush people claimed last weekend, just before the third Presidential debate, that it was still conceivable that he could eke out an Electoral College victory.

The debates preoccupied people here, and, as in the past, much of the commentary about them was silly. There was much advance talk—drawing on the sports language that seems to dominate discussions of debates—of Bush's need to deliver "a knockout blow" to Clinton. But such a thing has never happened in the past (candidates have sometimes socked themselves in the jaw) and, given Clinton's skills, it wasn't likely to happen this time. What Bush "had" to do was offer a compelling rationale for his reëlection, spell out his program for the future—something he's been strangely unable to do all year. We may look back at this election and say that the floor went out from under Bush during the Republican Convention and he was never able to climb back into the race. Some historical determinists will say that, given the economic conditions, the Reagan-Bush Administrations' tired blood, and the cycles of history, the Democrats were set to win all along. But such analyses leave out factors like chance and accident and human fallibility. Leads in elections are often much more fragile at the time than people later recall.

MANY people in the press had been calling for years for a format in which the two candidates could "really go at each other," and that's what they got in the disheartening spectacle of the Vice-Presidential debate, in Atlanta. Dan Quayle's manic attack-dog act succeeded in giving emphasis to the question of whether Clinton can be trusted—underlining some doubts that were already out there—but at the cost of Quayle's own reputation. His behavior pleased his partisans, but showed that subtlety escapes him and that, though he may no longer be frightened, he hasn't grown or become more substantial. He had been urged to be feisty, and show that he's not the frightened Quayle of four years ago, but he seemed to have no control mechanism. (Quayle is actually fairly well informed, if not deep.) Time and again, Quayle said, "Bill Clinton has trouble telling the truth." Quayle (or his handlers) coined the phrase "You're pulling a Clinton" to specify a waffle or a vague position taken by Al Gore, though he may have overdone it by repeating it too often. Gore regressed as well, coming over more as the wooden and somewhat heavy-handed candidate that he was in 1988. But Gore also showed that he's well informed and steady. Gore's advisers said that he didn't respond to Quayle's many attacks on Clinton's truthfulness and character because he didn't want to get into a so's-your-old-man routine with him, or even acknowledge that what Quayle was charging was an issue—and that his goal was to be positive and talk about the Clinton-Gore program. Perhaps at some level Gore knew that he couldn't really defend Clinton's honesty. His restraint didn't go over well with some people in the Clinton camp. That the single-moderator format worked far better in the third debate (ably moderated by Jim Lehrer), in East Lansing, Michigan, was attributable in part to the fact that the rules were tighter and in part to the fact that the Presidential candidates couldn't possibly allow themselves to act as their running mates had.

Going into the last debate, the Bush campaign—working with material that Clinton had handed it—had in fact, according to its own polls, made some inroads into how people felt about Clinton's trustworthiness. Though Clinton people and others maintain that the public isn't interested in the questions about Clinton's draft stories, the Bush-Quayle campaign had evidence from focus-group studies that the draft issue was in fact "cutting" as part of the "character" issue. Still, the problem, a Bush adviser says, was that Bush didn't know how to frame the issue; because he was offended by Clinton's attempts to evade the draft and his involvement in antiwar demonstrations in England, the adviser says, he had made those acts in themselves the issues. Time after time, we would then see Mary Matalin, the campaign's political director and Bush's spunkiest supporter, standing on some tarmac somewhere, telling reporters that the issue wasn't those activities per se but Clinton's "pattern of prevarication." Bush finally framed the issue this way in the third debate. The Bush people argue that Bush's issues (term limits for members of Congress, the line-item veto, anti-crime legislation) get overwhelmingly positive reactions in focus groups. Focus groups are increasingly a bane of American politics. What the Bush people miss—or, possibly, don't miss but can't admit—is that these issuelets don't count for much when stacked against the mega-issue of the economy.

Nonetheless, the Bush people are onto a real problem with Clinton—one that could cause trouble in his Presidency (if there is one). His fibs and evasions—many of them seemingly unnecessary—raise questions now, but in a Presidency, under a magnifying glass, they could cause difficulty. Even Clinton's friends acknowledge his tendency to play loose with the truth. He seems to have got away with this sort of thing in his earlier political life—perhaps all through his life. Clinton's untruths aren't on the scale of Ronald Reagan's and George Bush's lies about the Iran-Contra affair, or—certainly—Richard Nixon's. Perhaps the public is inured to lying by high officials, but we could do without another layer of cynicism.

SEVERAL of Bush's aides express frustration over his failure to supply a rationale for his reëlection; they have believed for some time that without one, no matter how much he damaged Clinton, he was unlikely to be reëlected. On those rare occasions when Bush does cite an agenda, he rushes through it as if it were a set of afterthoughts. His advisers offer various explanations for this. More than one aide suggests it comes from the same place that causes him to speak in shorthand, in non-sentences: that it's all very clear in his own mind, and he thinks faster than he talks. One aide says, "It's like Nexis—he deals in key thoughts, so he gives off the sense of rushing through it." This aide conceded, "It's a problem for him as a public expositioner." But the trouble may go deeper: Bush isn't interested in a domestic agenda, and, try as his aides do to graft one onto him, it doesn't stick. To put it another way, he hasn't "internalized" it. Thus, his relatively coherent program and philosophy as served up in his speech to the Detroit Economic Club in mid-September (and followed by two effective ads setting forth an agenda) didn't stay with him, because they weren't his—they were the work of a smart speechwriter. Also, the plan didn't register well in a Bush focus group right away, so his managers put it aside. Tying one's principles to focus groups doesn't make for leadership. If Bush loses, he will have been punished by the electorate for the right reason.

The debates did give Clinton an opportunity—or requirement—to be more concise about what he plans to do if he's elected, but he still hasn't made himself entirely clear about that. In the first debate, in St. Louis, he stated that his top two priorities would be a jobs program and a health-care plan. Instant job creation won't be easy; the Clinton people are now considering ways to speed up public-works projects and, through that and other means, try to boost consumer confidence. Clinton and Gore have a new-fashioned view of "infrastructure"—building not just roads and bridges but also high-speed rail systems

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and “smart” highways, and encouraging the private sector to build “electronic highways,” so that people can have interactive access to vast data bases. Fortunately for Clinton, the wisdom is shifting from making deficit reduction the highest priority to stipulating that some economic stimulus should come first—that it would be unwise to impose serious budget cuts on a weak economy. But Clinton still says that he can cut the deficit in half in four years (even though he makes few serious suggestions to this end) and pay for his program of new “investment” in infrastructure, education, and environmental cleanup, and of tax cuts for the middle class—largely by raising taxes on upper-income people, increasing taxes on foreign corporations operating in the United States, and cutting defense spending. However, in using suspect figures now—in particular, estimating an unrealistic rate of growth next year—Clinton may be setting up the public for more disillusionment. He seemed to anticipate this in the third debate—and tried to fend off Bush’s charge that his program would require him to raise taxes on the middle class—when he pledged that if the revenues weren’t sufficient to pay for his new programs he’d slow down the programs or find further budget cuts: “I will not raise taxes on the middle class to pay for these programs.” This didn’t rule out raising taxes on the middle class for other reasons—though the sly distinction may have escaped many people. In the debate, Clinton did go on to say that he wouldn’t say “Read my lips” on anything, because “I cannot foresee what emergencies might develop in this country.”

CLINTON’S and Bush’s robotic performances in the first debate made Ross Perot’s jokes and homilies and unique way of putting things welcome to the audience—and led many to say that Perot had “won” the debate, even though what he said was pretty thin. Inevitably, by the second debate he had grown tiresome. And his putting the admirable but inconceivable James Stockdale through the ordeal of the Vice-Presidential debate only further undermined Perot’s plausibility. (It was also angering, because Stockdale’s presence on Perot’s ticket was a fluke, brought about by Perot’s in-again, out-again, in-again performance.)

Bush didn’t seem to know what to do in the second debate, in Richmond, and in fact he has been in an almost impossible position. He can’t argue that he should be reëlected on the basis of his record: if he argues, as he did in the first debate, that economic conditions are improving (in some respects they are, slightly, but Americans have experienced a drop in their standard of living over the past four years), he looks as if he doesn’t understand what’s been troubling people; if he goes on the attack too much he might look un-Presidential, and risks lapsing into his goofy “mode.” Given his inability to lay out a rationale for reëlection, there’s little left. He was obviously uncomfortable with the format for the second debate—with the candidates left to lean against or sit upon high stools, and with audience participation. The format was Clinton’s suggestion (as Clinton pointed out twice), and in imposing it on Bush he hoodwinked him, because Clinton had become highly skilled at this “town meeting” exercise, and he strolled toward the audience, and made eye contact with it, like an accomplished talk-show host. Bush advisers say that he is quite put off by Clinton’s easy circumnavigation of issues, and he was clearly uncomfortable with the whole thing. (Thus his famous looking at his watch.) His poignant line “I think if Barbara Bush were running this year she’d be elected, but it’s too late” was a signal of his despair.

Bush had planned to take Clinton on more in the second debate, by going through a series of issues—miles-per-gallon standards, the new trade treaty with Mexico, the Gulf War—on which Clinton had waffled. The idea, a Presidential adviser told me after the second debate, was to show a pattern of vacillation. (Bush did get around to this in the third debate.) But in the second debate Bush—though he did get off the line “You can’t turn the White House into the Waffle House”—was in fact thrown off his game by two questions from the audience toward the beginning which amounted to lectures to the candidates that they should eschew personal attacks and stay on “the issues.” He didn’t seem to have another game plan. Though there has grown up much romanticism about the Richmond debate—the candidates being questioned by “real people”—the format let the candidates off easy by allowing them to offer their canned speechlets about their various programs. Much was made afterward—the Clinton people made it a “talking point”—of the fact that the President bobbled an answer to a young black woman’s confusing question “How has the national debt personally affected each of your lives?” Discerning at last that she was referring to the recession, Bush underlined his unconnectedness with what’s going on by explaining that he had recently been to a black church and read in the church bulletin about teen-age pregnancies and “the difficulties that families are having to make ends meet.” This was the moral equivalent of Bush’s buying socks at J. C. Penney last Christmas, to do his bit toward encouraging consumer spending. But Clinton’s answer wasn’t a whole lot better: moving toward the young woman and speaking with a great show of sincerity, he said that, because he comes from a small state, “when people lose their jobs there’s a good chance I’ll know them by their names.” (From there he went into his customary attack on “twelve years of trickle-down economics,” and the need for change.) The Clinton people pushed the line that Bush’s answer was “a metaphor for the entire campaign”—and, in a painful way, it was.

WHILE the debates were proceeding, Washington became like a scene out of “Götterdämmerung.” Three weeks before the election, the long knives were not only being used among Republicans but were being used openly. The President was acting desperate—

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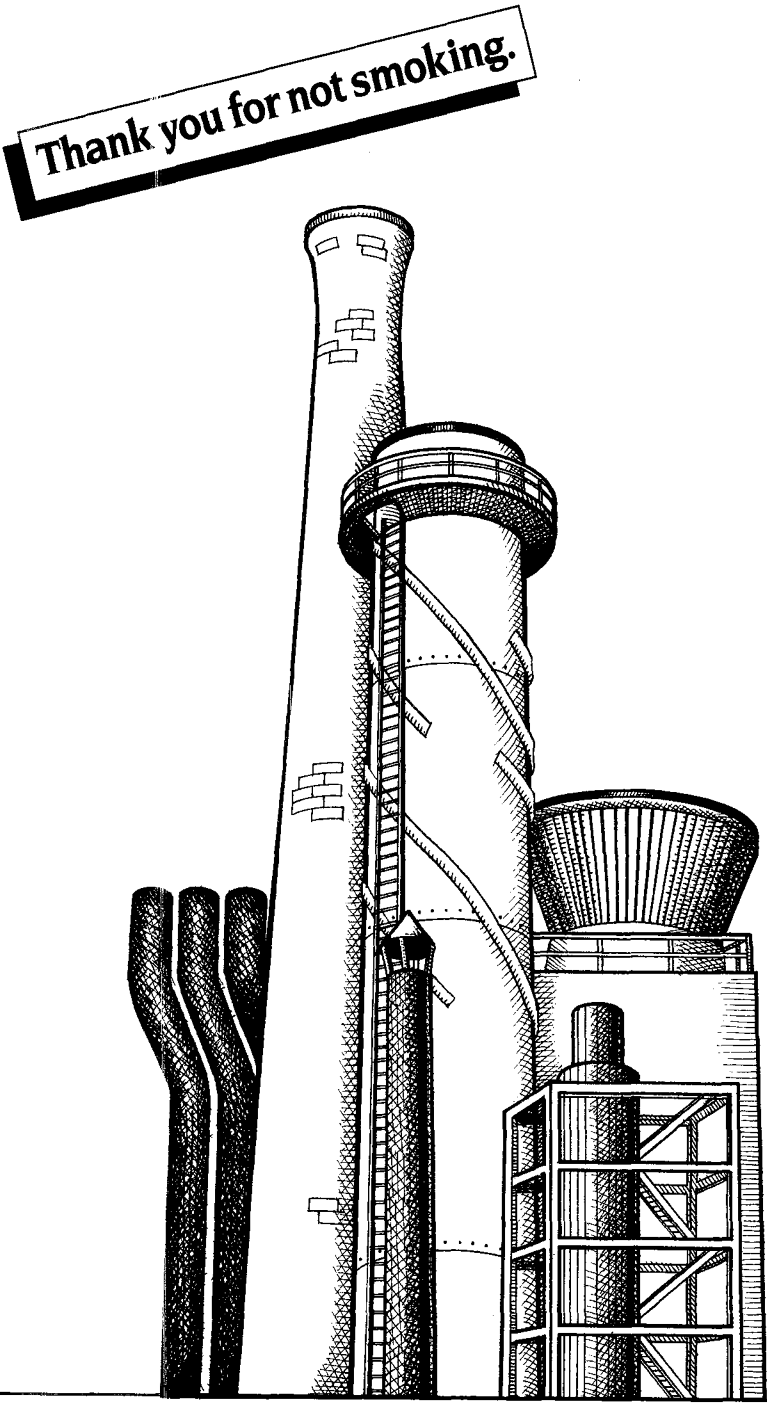
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throwing over anyone whose ejection might help him get some votes. His having his press secretary tell reporters last week that if he was reëlected he would dump his economic team—Treasury Secretary Nicholas Brady, Budget Director Richard Darman, and Michael Boskin, the chairman of the Council of Economic Advisers—was craven and ungrateful. Brady and Boskin had already made it clear that they didn't choose to stay for a second term. Brady is a close friend of the President's and a graceful man, even if, in the opinion of many, he has been a weak Treasury Secretary. Darman's case was a little more understandable, since Darman—a brilliant but abrasive man—had just treacherously let it be known, through a Washington *Post* series by Bob Woodward, that he considered the President's renunciation of the 1990 tax increase (as part of a budget deal) "sheer idiocy." Darman was correct on the merits, but seriously disloyal to a President on the ropes. (Darman also called Brady a "dolt.") The President's throwing his economic team to the wolves was another in a long line of propitiations of the right, who blame those advisers for the 1990 budget deal, and who still—after all that has happened—insist upon the virtues of supply-side economics. In the course of the third debate, Bush revealed his continuing confusion about what he is supposed to be. He impressively said that he had signed on to the tax increase "because I thought it was right"—and then went right on to say, "And I made a mistake."

James Baker and his key aides seldom emerge from their White House bunker. Baker, who is famous for never being caught near a disaster, did appear on NBC following the first debate and said, "The job to which [Bush] has appointed me, of course, is chief of staff of the White House, not chairman of his campaign." A Baker aide says that the reason Baker hasn't ventured out much is that he doesn't wish to upstage the President—not an entirely convincing explanation. Bush's offhand mention, during the first debate, of the fact that Baker would stay at the White House to manage domestic policy in a second term didn't set the country on fire, and was a sign of Bush's myopia. (An on-again, off-again speech that Baker was to give about plans for the second term has been cancelled; Baker aides say that his giving such a speech would only emphasize the President's own lack of commitment to domestic policy and play up the idea of Baker as "deputy President." It would also tie Baker more closely to the President's fate.) All these sad doings—the desperate efforts of a President who doesn't comprehend what's going on around him, and can't understand why the country might reject him (some White House aides try the Churchill analogy, but only a few reporters have bought it)—give the feel of an Administration in collapse. So do the finger-pointing—while Bush is still out there trying to win—and the assigning of blame for the inept campaign he has run. So does the virtual shutdown of various policy areas in the government—unable to get guidance from above, or in effect barred from doing anything that might harm the President's reëlection chances. And so does the alarming circling around among secretive and powerful agencies: the well-spread news last week that the Justice Department is conducting a criminal investigation of William Sessions, the director of the F.B.I., on what appear to be trivial charges, at the same time that the F.B.I. is investigating the Justice Department and the C.I.A. for their possible roles in covering up information about illegal loans to Iraq by the Atlanta branch of an Italian bank. It's not Watergate, but it has some of that feel—including the feel that we are far from the end of the story. The whole business about the expedited search for Clinton's and his mother's passport files, ostensibly to help journalists pursuing rumors that Bush people had been spreading, was also unnerving. So was the fact that by their actions the Bush people were able to get the rumors—unproved, that during the Vietnam War Clinton had sought citizenship in another country—into print. This isn't a new trick for them.

BY the time the third debate was over, on Monday night, the public had in fact—despite all the flaws of debates as a test for the Presidency—got a fairly accurate picture of the three Presidential candidates. Bush's much-improved performance—he was crisp, quick, and for the first time showed some energy, and made many of his points effectively—didn't make up for the fact that he still didn't lay out his program for the future. His new show of vigor heartened his troops, but what he said doesn't appear to have changed many minds. It was as if Bush had decided that if he went down, people wouldn't be able to say—as many did after the second debate—that he had quit. Though in the final debate he made strong attacks (without looking goofy) on Clinton's proposals as just more "tax and spend" and "trickle-down government," he didn't spell out another difference that his staff has been pushing: that while Clinton's program relies heavily on further government involvement in all sorts of areas (business, education, family leave, health care), his relies more on giving people the right to make their own choices, through vouchers and tax credits. Bush's final debate performance showed the contradictions in his personality—the side of him that is gracious and decent and is also in control, as opposed to the ruthless, slashing side, which was on display again the next day. Since then, energized, he has been campaigning hard, and more confidently than he has all year.

Clinton's debate performances showed him to be knowledgeable, articulate, quick on his feet, and very polished. Whether his smoothness will wear well over time is an open question. In the final debate, Clinton, anxious to not lose his strong lead in the polls, met the goals that he and his advisers had set: don't take chances, look good, sound good, and keep the focus on the economy and the future. (Clinton played loose with the truth over why he had offered conflicting stories about his attempts to evade the draft, and over whether he had ever advocated raising miles-per-gallon standards to forty.) Perot's debate performances, including the final one, showed him to be smart, original, not enormously well informed, and a little

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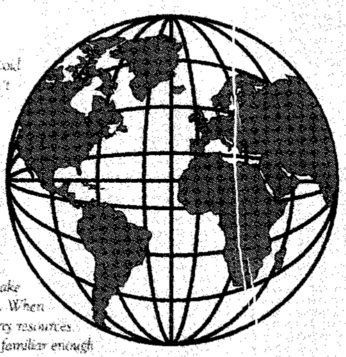

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strange. Perot has a keen ear for what's bothering people, and in the debates didn't talk much about his tough agenda of tax increases and spending cuts. (The debates didn't highlight his paranoid side, or penchant for tall tales, or his thin skin.) Perot made Bush's position more difficult by slamming him with charges that he had had misguided policies in Panama and Iraq. Perot may have overstated the case by saying the Administration had "told [Saddam] he could take the northern part of Kuwait," but he wasn't off base in suggesting that we had given Saddam no sense we would react strongly if he attacked Kuwait.

THIS week, as the election drew nearer, the Clinton campaign was part euphoric and part tense. Numerous people outside the campaign (and some in it) were busy working on the transition—and looking toward future power and access. (For the first time in a long time, it's the Republicans who are planning post-election vacations.) There was talk on the part of some campaign officials—and Clinton—about seeking a mandate. All this worried some of the people in Little Rock. From experience, the Clinton people are aware of the dangers of appearing to think a race is over, and of the press's saying it is. After Clinton won in Michigan and Illinois in mid-March, the press wrote that he had sewed up the nomination, and the Clinton campaign became complacent—and Clinton lost in Connecticut. James Carville, the campaign's senior strategist, described himself to me this week as "very upset" about all the talk in the media about the election's being over, and said, "The voters don't want the media to take this election away from them." Carville is opposed to talk out of headquarters about a "mandate" or "governing"; he says, "I'm very skittish about all this." A plan for Clinton to give a speech about what he would do in his first hundred days has been shelved. The team at Little Rock was watching closely as Perot in midweek began to move up in the polls; and their own polls indicated that the gap between Clinton and Bush was narrowing to single digits (about nine points)—close to what the Bush polls showed. (Public polls this week showed the gap to be much wider—in the mid- to upper teens; political professionals attribute these disparities to differences in methodology and other factors, not all of which they claim to understand.) The Clinton people worried that, despite a formidable lead in the Electoral College, in the last ten days of the election Clinton's position would continue to erode, Perot would continue to rise, and Bush's attacks on Clinton would start to stick. The Clinton people know how unpredictable the voters have been all year. When I asked George Stephanopoulos, the Clinton campaign's communications director, what, exactly, he was worried about, he replied, "It's such a weird year."

LAST year, it was fashionable to say that this would be a boring election: that the public was angry and turned off by politics. It was generally assumed that Bush would win easily, given the powers of incumbency and the Democrats' habitual failure to win the White House. Bill Clinton stepped in where more "eminent" Democrats decided not to tread—saving themselves for the election that would follow the second Bush term. Not long ago, a number of key Democrats—including those who chose not to run—came to realize that if Clinton wins he will have wiped out a whole generation of would-be candidates. Since New Hampshire, the people have been demanding that the candidates stay on the real issues—the economy and what is to be done about it. They made it clear that they wouldn't put up with a rerun of 1988—this is probably what caused George Bush and James Baker to flounder for so long. Reversing a twenty-year trend, people are registering to vote in record numbers. An astonishing ninety-one million people watched the third debate—also reversing the previous pattern of audiences dropping as the debates proceed. Ross Perot's half-hour unadorned, didactic commercials—an unglamorous man sitting at a desk with pointer and charts—have attracted big audiences. Despite its imperfections, and whatever happens, this will have been a contest in which the people reclaimed the election process. ♦

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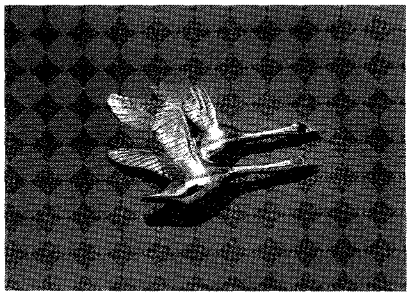

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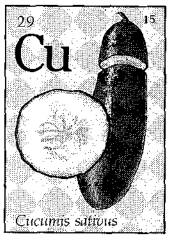

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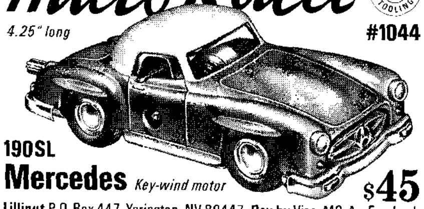

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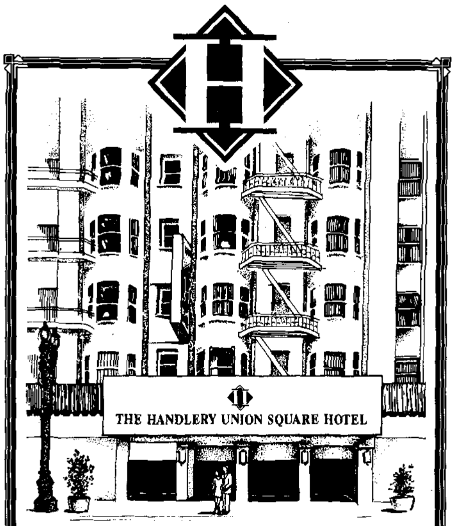
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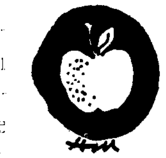
FROM KAFKA TO DREYFUS

by Lawrence Weschler

A FEW weeks ago, the subject of my recent article on Czechoslovakia ("The Velvet Purge: The Trials of Jan Kavan," in the issue of October 19th) stood poised on the verge of a decisive hearing. Kavan, the veteran Czech oppositionist and activist-in-exile, had returned to a hero's welcome in Prague in November of 1989 and had subsequently been elected to Parliament, only to find himself being denounced some months later as a longtime agent of the StB, the Czech Communist state security apparatus, and his case becoming emblematic of a witch-hunting hysteria that seemed to sweep the entire country. Kavan had placed most of his hopes for redemption in the process known as lustration. He was convinced that any fair and impartial review of the StB files upon which the charges against him had been based would prove his innocence, and by this fall, otherwise stymied in his attempts to achieve satisfaction through the morass of the rest of Prague's post-Communist judicial system, he had managed to get his case placed before the so-called Independent Commission, which was charged with overseeing a select few of the more borderline cases in the sweeping purification process. The independence of that commission had seemed questionable, its membership hopelessly politicized—concerning Kavan's sensational case, at least. Still, he had been hoping for a minimally fair hearing when he arrived at the assigned hour, 8:30 A.M., on September 15th. Instead, the commission failed for several hours even to muster the required quorum. When a necessary member finally wandered in, Kavan immediately launched into his defense. But before he could finish his statement, let alone present witnesses, another commission member wandered out, and the whole enterprise had to be postponed—until October 16th at 4 P.M.

Kavan arrived promptly for that hearing, as I learned from a fax he sent me later that day. However, he was then informed that the rest of his defense would no longer be required, and would not be heard. The commission had already reached its verdict, which was that he had indeed been a "conscious collaborator" with the StB. (An appalling lack of due process has characterized many of the proceedings in Czechoslovakia during the lustration period.) When Kavan asked which piece of evidence in his file the commission members had found convincing, he was told that they had determined, by a majority vote, that he must have been intelligent enough to realize back in 1969 and 1970 that the education attaché in the Czech London Embassy, a man named Frantisek Zajicek, with whom he was having repeated dealings in his capacity as the leading Czech-student-union activist then resident in England, was in fact an StB agent who was recording the gist of all their conversations for transmission back to Prague—this despite the fact that Zajicek himself had recently testified in a different venue to never having allowed Kavan any inkling of his own secret double role. Kavan pointed out that a "conscious collaborator" with the Czech secret police would by definition have been required to keep such contacts secret, whereas he had regularly informed the Czech student union back in Prague in detail about his meetings with Zajicek. In fact, his own main contact in Prague, another former student-union official, Zuzana Blüh, was eagerly standing ready to corroborate his account. But this argument made no impact. And when he pointed out that all those mentioned in his file as supposed subjects of his informing (including the noted journalist William Shawcross) were continuing to stand with him—several had transmitted testimonials to the commission to that effect, and Shawcross himself had earlier flown to Prague at his own expense to present testimony to the commission specifically refuting any lingering suggestions that Kavan might have been following Zajicek's instructions in any way—he was abruptly told that once a commission verdict had been reached it could be discussed no further.

After the session, however, the commission's chairman, Jaroslav Basta, did inform Kavan (as he subsequently went on to inform several local news outlets) that he had voted for his innocence, of which he remained convinced. As a fellow student radical of that generation of 1968, Basta had a much more nuanced recollection of the actual conditions of oppositional practice in the first several years of the post-1968 normalization than did most of his younger and infinitely more self-satisfied colleagues on the commission. "Apparently, other factors besides an unbiased evaluation of the available facts played their role" is the way Kavan put it to me in his fax, though, as he went on, "Basta did not elaborate on what they were."



Kavan was told curtly that he could appeal the commission's ruling to the Prague Municipal Court, which is to say back to Kafkaland—the very miasma from which he'd been trying to escape when he appealed to the Independent Commission in the first place. Not the least of his problems now is that he simply lacks the funds to mount such an appeal, in part because he is still saddled with immense debts from the days of his London oppositionist operation—thousands of pounds in liabilities, which themselves belie all the speculation currently floating around Prague to the effect that Kavan simply sold his soul to the StB for money.

At one point in my report, I suggested that the operative metaphor for Kavan's present situation was not so much Kafka as Dreyfus, with the entire state beginning to turn itself inside out trying to defend an increasingly dubious fiat. In the days since I heard the results of the Independent Commission's hearing, the Dreyfus analogy has kept returning to my mind. Like Dreyfus, Kavan himself is clearly a difficult, tormented, prickly, and immensely complicated person, an often unsympathetic character, with a positive genius for alienating potential allies, but one who also happens to be manifestly not guilty—by any standard of reasonable doubt—of the charges currently ranged against him. And, as with Dreyfus, though nowhere (yet) to such an advanced degree, a distinct whiff of anti-Semitism has wafted into the social revulsion against Kavan. (A similar sort of anti-Semitism—or "anti-cosmopolitanism," as it tends to get euphemized these days—has beset many veteran oppositionists, in venues as varied as Hungary, Poland, Romania, Yugoslavia, and the former Soviet Union.) But, even more to the point, just as Dreyfus's case seemed to split all French society after the nation's humiliation at the hands of the Germans in 1871, the Kavan case seems to be cleaving Czech society today. Again, not quite to the same degree—in part because Kavan's is only one of many such cases, though clearly the most notorious.

Still, the lust for a convenient scapegoat following a mass humiliation (which in the case of Czechoslovakia consisted in the appalling passivity of the vast majority of the country during the decades of Communist normalization) is achingly similar. Czech society today is rent between anti-Kavanists (a smug majority, egged on by the ruling coalition of Czech Prime Minister Vaclav Klaus, which also controls much of the country's media) and pro-Kavanists. In France, the post-Dreyfus divisions have continued to reverberate for more than a century; I suspect that fifty years from now Czech political life will continue to be haunted by its Kavanist division, and in all likelihood people will still be debating the case.

However, as I say, Kavan's case is not unique. Since the early seventies, from their exile in Toronto, the Czech novelist Josef Skvorecky and his wife, Zdena, have run 68 Publishers, perhaps the foremost publisher of authentic Czech literature anywhere in the world. (Their authors have included Milan Kundera, Vaclav Havel, Ivan Klima, Jaroslav Seifert, and countless others.) One day early this past summer, they were shocked to discover that Zdena's name, too, had surfaced on the dread list of StB informers—an utterly preposterous stigma, yet one that, as in Kavan's case, may prove almost impossible to remove through any sort of appeal. Skvorecky himself has lately taken to quoting Joseph Conrad (that other great Eastern European exile) on the subject of revolutions: "The scrupulous and the just, the noble, humane, and devoted natures; the unselfish and the intelligent may begin a movement—but it passes away from them. . . . Afterwards comes the turn of all the pretentious intellectual failures of the time." ♦

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ANNALS OF GOVERNMENT

IN THE LOOP: BUSH'S SECRET MISSION

by Murray Waas and Craig Unger

IN late July, 1986, William J. Casey, then the director of Central Intelligence, sat down with George Bush, then the Vice-President of the United States, in an out-of-the-way study that Casey maintained on the third floor of the old Executive Office Building, the rococo structure adjoining the White House. Casey had something he wanted Bush to do.

For many years, both Bush and Casey had moved easily in the worlds of foreign policy and Republican politics, and Bush had once held Casey's job. But their relationship was never entirely comfortable. Casey, gruff and perpetually dishevelled, was the product of public and parochial schools in Queens and on Long Island—his father was a Tammany Hall pension bureaucrat—and of Fordham. Bush, elaborately friendly in manner, was the offspring of Connecticut gentry. Like his father, an investment banker who served in the Senate, Bush attended Yale and was tapped for Skull and Bones. Casey made millions on his own as a stock speculator; Bush, with family help, grew moderately prosperous in the oil business before his political rise in Houston. Both men held high posts under Richard Nixon, but Nixon himself treated Casey as an equal and Bush condescendingly. It was under Gerald Ford that Bush was appointed to the job Casey now held.

The two men were different in more than background. Casey was part of the rising conservative movement, the historic antagonist of Bush and his ancestors within the Republican Party. In the Cold War, Casey believed not in containment but in what in the late forties and early fifties had been called rollback. He saw every stirring in every corner of the world through an unchanging ideological prism. Bush, by contrast, was a consummate pragmatist. As Casey knew, Bush was capable of rapidly adopting new positions if expediency or advancement seemed to demand it. He had done so on the issue of recognizing China under Nixon, and he had done so on abortion and on economic policy when he became Ronald Reagan's running mate.

According to someone who knew both men, Casey had originally distrusted Bush's lack of conviction. Lately, however, he had begun to see Bush's pragmatism in a new light. Whatever vision the Vice-President might lack, he was a man of immense personal discipline, and he understood accommodation as a way to achieve goals. Moreover, during his service as permanent representative to the United Nations, as chief of the United States liaison office in China, and as director of the C.I.A., he had mastered the arts of compartmentalization and secrecy. "Casey knew there was nobody in government who could keep a secret better," a former high-level C.I.A. official who worked with Casey has told us. "He knew that Bush was someone who could keep his confidences and be trusted. Bush had the same capacity as Casey to receive a briefing and give no hint that he was in the know."

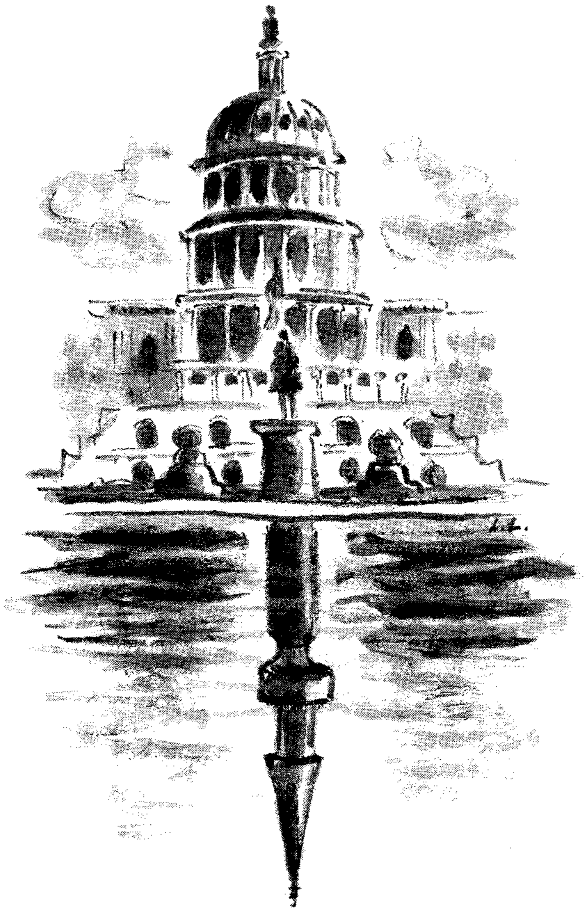
Now, in 1986, Casey, seventy-three years old and suffering from prostate cancer, said he needed Bush to run a covert errand. Iran was proving recalcitrant in secret negotiations to exchange arms for hostages who were being held in Beirut by terrorists with links to Iran, so Casey had dreamed up a scheme for forcing Iran's hand. It required someone of authority to convey a message to Iran's enemy Saddam Hussein, the President of Iraq, indirectly and without leaving fingerprints. Vice-President Bush was the ideal courier. He was about to visit the capitals of countries in the Middle East in order to "advance the peace process" between Israelis and Arabs, as he told the New York *Times*. But if he accepted Casey's assignment he would also be there to advance the war process; that is, to heat up the war between Iran and Iraq, with an incendiary message from Washington to Baghdad—escalate the air war and escalate the bombing deep inside Iranian territory.

Casey's reasoning was that if Saddam Hussein could be induced to order his fastidiously cautious Air Force to attack Iran in strength, Iran would be forced to turn anew to the United States for missiles and other weapons of air defense. The United States would then use its enhanced leverage to get better terms from the Iranians for the release of the hostages. (Casey may have been particularly concerned about the plight of one of the hostages, the Lebanon C.I.A. station chief William A. Buckley.) And for Casey there was another enticement as well, according to two Reagan Administration officials whom he frequently confided in: by bringing off this scheme, he would be manipulating two rival policy factions in the Administration.

These officials say that Bush carried out the mission Casey had assigned him. It put Bush directly in the center of action—in a role at the very point where a series of covert initiatives with Iraq and Iran converged. Three months later, on November 3, 1986, the Beirut news magazine *Al Shiraa* reported that the Reagan Administration was shipping arms to Iran, and soon the term "Iran-Contra" entered the lexicon of American political scandal.

IN the six years since *Al Shiraa's* scoop, a great deal of information has come to light about the activities of the Reagan Administration—and, later, the Bush Administration—in the Middle East and the Persian Gulf region. The original Iran-Contra revelations—that the United States secretly traded arms for hostages with Iran, and that some of the resulting profits were diverted to aid the Nicaraguan Contras—have been amplified by the reports of the Tower Commission, the congressional Iran-Contra committees, and the criminal prosecutions of Reagan Administration officials by Lawrence E. Walsh, the independent counsel charged with inquiring into the Iran-Contra scandal. As a result, it is widely known that from the early days of the first Reagan Administration the United States allowed sizable numbers of United States weapons to flow (via Israel) to Iran. More recently, investigations by the Los Angeles *Times*, by ABC's "Nightline," and by Representative Henry B. Gonzalez, chairman of the House Banking, Finance, and Urban Affairs Committee, have begun to uncover the events known as Iraqgate, in which the United States played an active role in arming Iraq. The ample public record provides the framework of much of the narrative in this account. In addition, a number of classified government documents have been leaked to us by present and former officials who have served in sensitive positions in the Reagan and Bush Administrations. The documents include cables between the State Department and embassies in the field, "talking points" to guide high officials in meetings or in important telephone calls, internal National Security Council working papers, and intelligence reports by the C.I.A. Some of these documents have been the basis of a series of articles by Murray Waas and Douglas Frantz in the Los Angeles *Times*. Finally, we have interviewed dozens of participants in these events. Some of them—Howard Teicher, a former member of the National Security Council staff; Caspar Weinberger, the former Secretary of Defense; and Richard W. Murphy, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs from 1983 to 1989—were willing to speak on the record.

Although the revelations that have come to be known as Iran-Contra and Iraqgate have generally been seen as separate sets of events, this is largely a consequence of the choppy way in which they came to light. Thanks to the recently obtained documents and interviews, it is now possible to see the events as a single continuum of covert foreign-policy initiatives. The initiatives often became intertwined. Sometimes they were complementary, as when profits from arms sales to Iran were diverted to the Nicaraguan Contras. But more often the secret parties carrying them out were at odds with each other—particularly over the issue of which side to support in the Iran-Iraq War, which lasted from 1980 until 1988. The Administration was sharply divided as it "tilted" back and forth between support for Iran and support for Iraq, sometimes helping both countries simultaneously, sometimes covertly arming one side as a corrective to unanticipated consequences of having helped the other. Kept secret from the American people, and frequently conducted without the knowledge or oversight of Congress, these inconsistent and contradictory policies continued right up to the eve of the Gulf War.



In 1986, in the hope of achieving a hostage deal by forcing Iran to seek weapons from the United States, William Casey conceived a plan to send George Bush on a covert mission to pass military advice to Saddam Hussein.

LEE LORENZ

The new disclosures also make it possible to assess the role of George Bush as Vice-President and President during these events. President Bush has consistently denied playing any substantial role in the Iran-Contra scandal. In his campaign biography, "Looking Forward," he says he didn't really "see the picture as a whole" until after he was briefed, in December, 1986, by Senator David Durenberger, the chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee. He left the briefing, he writes, feeling that he'd "been deliberately excluded from key meetings involving details of the Iran operation." He has said that he was "not in the loop."

Bush did not comment on his "tilt" toward Iraq until February of this year, when the Los Angeles *Times* reported the role he had played in building up Saddam's military machine. "As you may remember in history, there was a lot of support at the time for Iraq as a balance to a much more aggressive Iran under Khomeini," the President told a reporter. "So that was part of the policy of the Reagan Administration. I was very proud to support that."

The evidence suggests, however, that he played an important role both in the arms-for-hostages deal with Iran and in Iraqgate, and that he actively participated in policies supplying military aid to both Iran and Iraq in their eight-year war.

THE roots of the covert policies go back to November 4, 1979, after the fall of the Shah, when the seizure of hostages at the United States Embassy in Teheran destroyed America's relations with Iran, formerly its surrogate in the region. When Iraq invaded Iran, on September 22, 1980, the United States and Israel found themselves in a bizarre and perplexing three-dimensional chess game. Iran was even more important to Israel than it was to the United States: the Israelis bought oil from and sold arms to Iran. More significant, Iran had provided a counterweight to Saddam Hussein's Iraq, which had long been fiercely anti-Israel, and which, if it won, could confront the Israelis with a potentially lethal threat.

Officially, the United States was neutral in the Iran-Iraq War. But from the onset two factions within the Reagan Administration struggled over which country posed the greater threat to United States interests. That struggle became the most acrimonious intra-Administration foreign-policy conflict of the entire Reagan-Bush era, with each faction funnelling substantial amounts of arms to one side or the other. One bloc, which included the national-security adviser, Robert C. McFarlane, and two members of his National Security Council staff, Howard Teicher and Oliver North, argued in favor of arming Iran, for two reasons: to enhance Israel's security and to facilitate better relations with an ascendant military, economic, and strategic power in the looming post-Khomeini era. Indeed, as early as 1979 Teicher had written a highly classified study endorsing Israel's view that Saddam's Iraq, not Khomeini's Iran, would ultimately pose the greater threat to the security of the Gulf region.

The pro-Iraq faction, led by Secretary of Defense Weinberger, Secretary of State George Shultz, and Assistant Secretary Richard Murphy, raised the spectre of Iran's Islamic fundamentalism spreading throughout the Persian Gulf and endangering the moderate governments of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, and thus the West's oil supplies. "Many of us thought it would be better if Iraq won," Weinberger has told the Los Angeles *Times* in an interview.

Amid this internal turmoil, one major figure quietly straddled both sides. "Bush was very much the diplomat," Teicher explained to us. Teicher, an intense, bearded thirty-eight-year-old, left the government in 1987 to start a computer-software company in Washington. He has been the most candid of the former officials who worked closely with Bush on the covert initiatives. "He was good at conducting diplomatic dialogue," Teicher said. "He knew the style, the diction. He was good at having a diplomatic discussion. But he could be swayed by personal relationships with foreign leaders. Regarding Iraq, he and Casey both had great naïveté, thinking you could be friends with Saddam Hussein, which was not unlike a lot of government officials at that time. And he saw the geostrategic logic in a new relationship with Iran. Bush's goals were contradictory because our policy was full of contradictions. He thought rapprochement with Iran was good. He thought talking to both sides was good."

In fact, Bush's vagueness concerning his views served a long-standing ambition to play a prominent role in foreign policy. As Ambassador to the United Nations, Bush had been manipulated by Henry Kissinger, who as the national-security adviser kept him in the dark about his secret diplomacy. Now, in the morass of American policy in the Middle East, Bush may have seen his chance to be a player.

OUR MASTERPIECE IS THE PRIVATE LIFE

I

Is there something down by the water, keeping itself from us,
Some shy event, some secret of the light that falls upon the deep,
Some source of sorrow that does not wish to be discovered yet?

Our happiness says we should not care, that desire,
If it wished, could cast its rainbows over the coarse porcelain
Of the world's skin, and with its measures fill the crystal

Reaches of the air. Why look for anything else?
Why not in the brightness of such weather allow ourselves to be
Astonished by the music and the privilege of our passing?

II

And now, my love, while the advocates of awfulness and sorrow
Push their dripping barge up and down the beach, let's eat
Our brill, and sip this beautiful white Beaune.

True, the light is artificial, and we are not well dressed,
But the heart of the matter is often beside the point.
We like it here. We like the bullocks in the field next door,

We like the sound of wind passing over grass. The way you speak,
In that low voice, our late-night disclosures ... Why live
For anything else? Our masterpiece is the private life.

III

Standing on the quay between the Roving Swan and the Star Emaculate,
Breathing the night air as the moment of pleasure taken
In pleasure vanishing seems to grow, its self-soiling

Beauty, which can only be what it was, sustaining itself
A little longer in its going, I think of our own smooth passage
Through the graded partitions, the crises that bleed

Into the ordinary, leaving us a little more tired each time,
A little more distant from the experiences which in the old days
Held us captive for hours. The drive along the winding road

Back to the house, the sea pounding against the cliffs,
The glass of whiskey on the table, the open book, the questions,
All the day's rewards waiting at the doors of sleep ...

—MARK STRAND

FROM the beginning of the Iranian hostage crisis, the United States officially took a hard line against Teheran. Israel followed suit. But in late 1980, before President Carter left office and the fifty-two American hostages were released, Israel initiated a secret policy of rapprochement with Iran. When, in early 1980, the Israeli Defense Minister, Ariel Sharon, had proposed that Israel covertly sell United States arms to Iran, Carter angrily said no. But Israeli intelligence continued to cultivate contacts with Iran. Classified State Department and C.I.A. reports support newspaper accounts earlier this year that in late 1980, without authorization from the Carter Administration, Israel began covert sales to Iran of American arms from its own stockpiles.

After January 20, 1981, when President Reagan was inaugurated and the hostages were released, the United States government continued to articulate a tough, uncompromising policy against the Islamic fundamentalists. Eight days after the inauguration, Reagan's first Secretary of State, Alexander Haig, spelled out the policy: "Let me state categorically today there will be no military equipment provided to the government of Iran." The American people, George Bush would say in a speech years later, regarded the Ayatollah's Iran with "an understandable animosity, a hatred, really," and he added, "I feel that way myself." Yet early in the first Reagan Administration a chasm had developed between this position and a covert strategy to arm Iran.

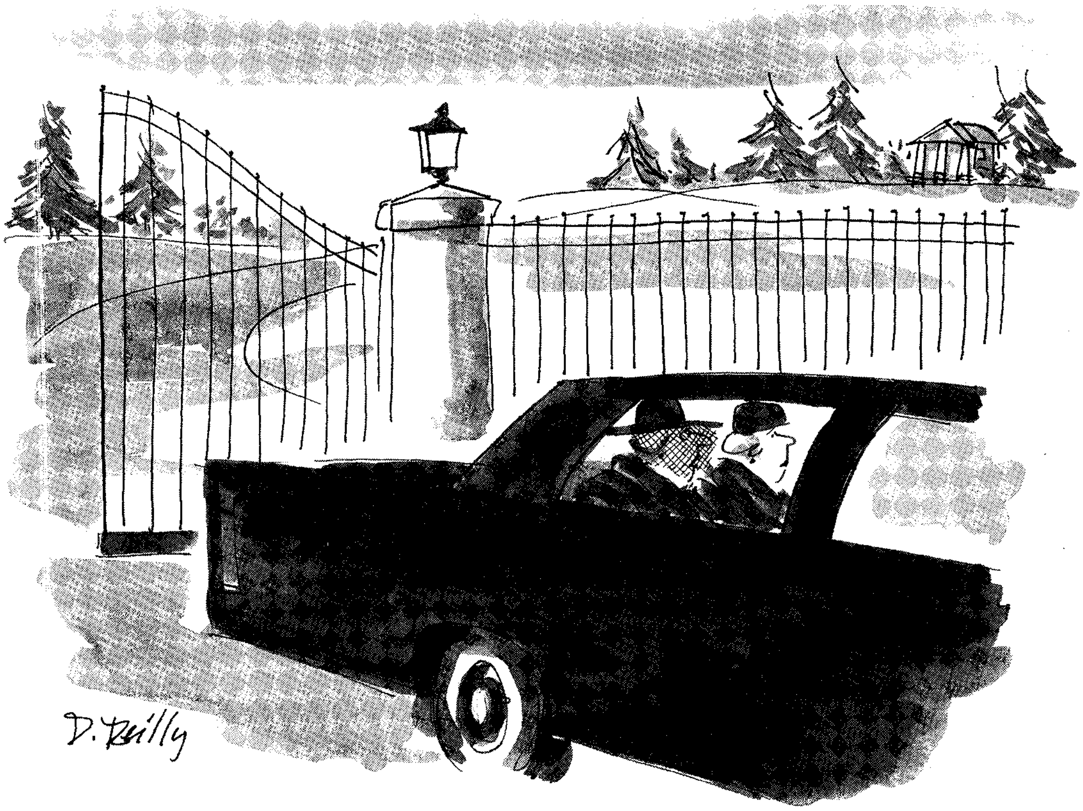
In 1981, the Israelis approached the new Administration for authorization to transfer arms of United States origin to Iran. The evidence is in classified notes paraphrasing an interview, in 1987, of David Satterfield, then an officer at the Israel desk of the State Department, by the congressional Iran-Contra committees. Satterfield informed the committees that Haig had told Israel that "in principle" it was O.K. to pass weapons on, but only for limited F-4 fighter-plane spare parts, and that the United States had to approve specific arms-sales lists in advance. Between December, 1981, and March, 1982, Satterfield said, it became apparent that Israel was not submitting lists for approval and was providing United States arms that went beyond F-4 spare parts. He said he had firsthand knowledge of at least fifty-three million dollars' worth of United States supplies sent to Iran by Israel. In an article in the New York *Times* last December, Seymour Hersh reported that "Israeli and American intelligence officials acknowledged that weapons, ammunition and spare parts worth several billion dollars flowed to Iran each year during the early 1980's."

Some officials simply say that the question of how much weaponry was funnelled to Iran will never be fully resolved. A former ambassador in the region during the Reagan Administration says, "The problem with this type of covert operation is that for officials to maintain their deniability they can do little to oversee the operation. In this case, it is probable that those who were to serve as their proxies—Israel and private international arms dealers—had agendas of their own, and the end result was that more arms were shipped than anyone in the Administration wanted."

The arms transfers appear to violate the Arms Export Control Act, a federal law that prohibits a recipient country from transferring "United States-origin" munitions to a third country without written permission from the United States. When such transfers are made, the same law requires that the President immediately notify Congress.

In 1981, with the help of United States-origin weapons supplied by Israel, Iran began to turn the war in its favor. In June, Israeli warplanes, in a strike on a secret facility at Osirak, near Baghdad, temporarily wiped out Iraq's nuclear-development programs. Then Iran mounted a series of small offensives, retaking the city of Abadan, on the Iraq-Iran border near the Persian Gulf. By the spring of 1982, Saddam Hussein held only a few pockets of Iranian territory.

Reports that Iran might win revived fears that the Islamic revolution would threaten America's oil interests in the region. As a report by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee later put it, the choice was "between permitting Iran to dominate the West's oil supply in the Persian Gulf and direct U.S. military in-



"Charles was battered by market swings, but it was Hillary that finished him off."

tervention." Congress, of course, was unaware of the irony behind the new dilemma: Iran's chances of victory were high partly because the Administration had allowed it to buy United States arms.

The flowing tides of real war in the Gulf unleashed bureaucratic war on the Potomac. Weinberger, Shultz, and Murphy increasingly believed that the United States had to launch a new secret initiative, to undo the damage wrought by the earlier one. President Reagan had set in motion a policy of contradictions. On the one hand, his Administration had allowed the clandestine sale of United States-origin arms to Iran so that they could be used against Saddam Hussein. On the other hand, in December, 1983, Reagan sent a special envoy, Donald Rumsfeld, to give Saddam a letter declaring that an Iraqi defeat would be "contrary to United States interests."

LAST February, Caspar Weinberger relaxed in an easy chair in his office at the law firm of Rogers & Wells, two blocks from the White House. Weinberger was one of the most vehement opponents of covert arms sales to Iran. "It was insanity," he told us. "How could you send arms to the Ayatollah when he was sworn to destroy us?" He expressed pride in the role he had played as a bureaucratic infighter opposed to the arms sales. "We fought the good battle," he said, "and we lost."

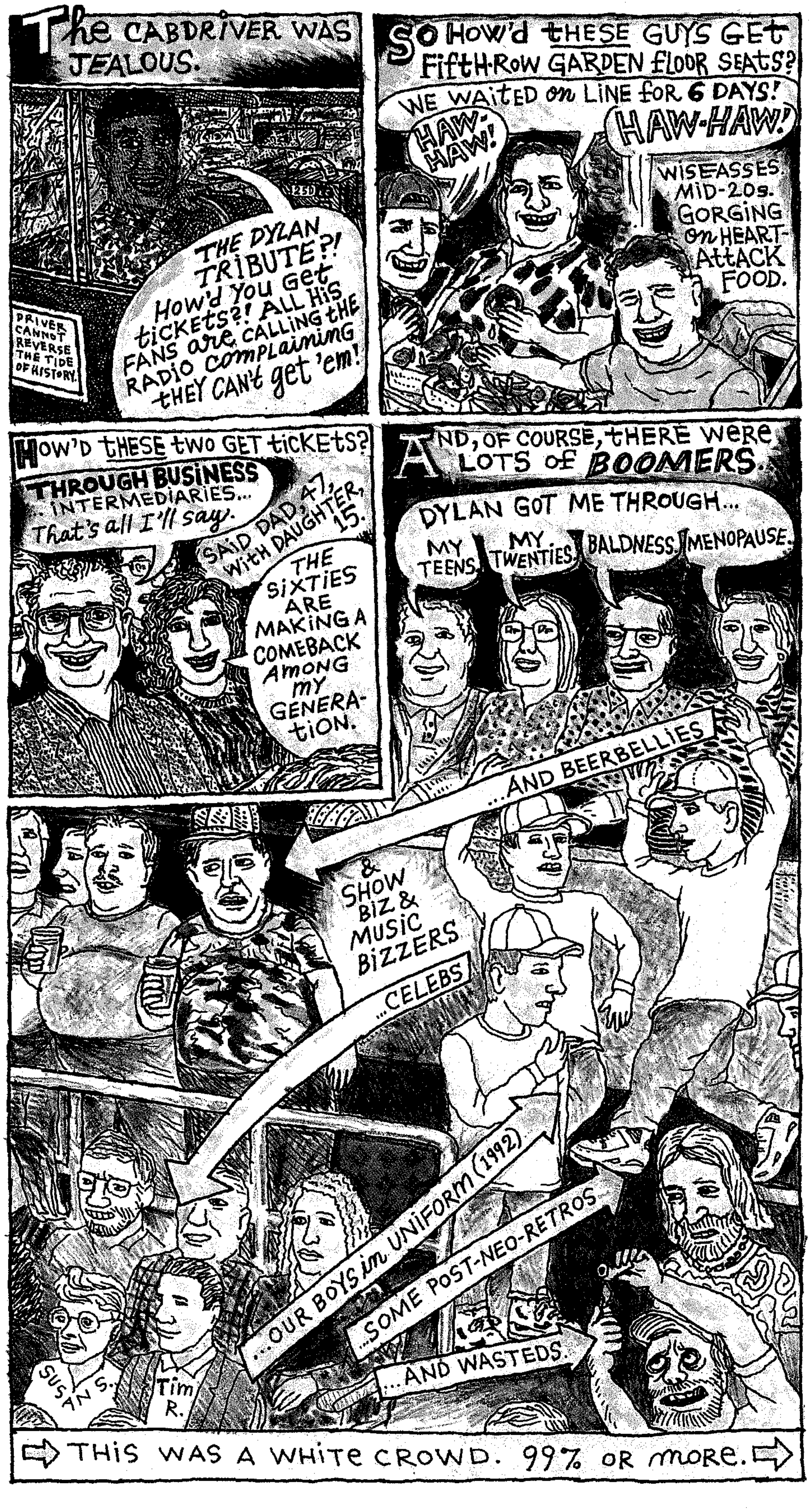
Iraqgate, however, discomforts Weinberger. When he was asked about Defense Department proposals to send arms to Iraq, he said, "The little that I know was that it was all handled by the C.I.A." On being pressed, he admitted, "There might have been a role by some people in the Pentagon. But I didn't keep a hand in that." Finally, he was shown two highly classified memos sent directly to him in 1982 and 1983 outlining Defense Department proposals to arm Saddam Hussein. He then refused to discuss the matter any further on the record, citing national-security concerns.

BY early 1982, Weinberger had concluded that Iraq would need United States military aid if an Iranian victory was to be avoided. When a covert Pentagon intelligence unit whose purpose was to obtain Soviet arms and technology learned of an opportunity to gain a coveted prize—a Soviet T-72

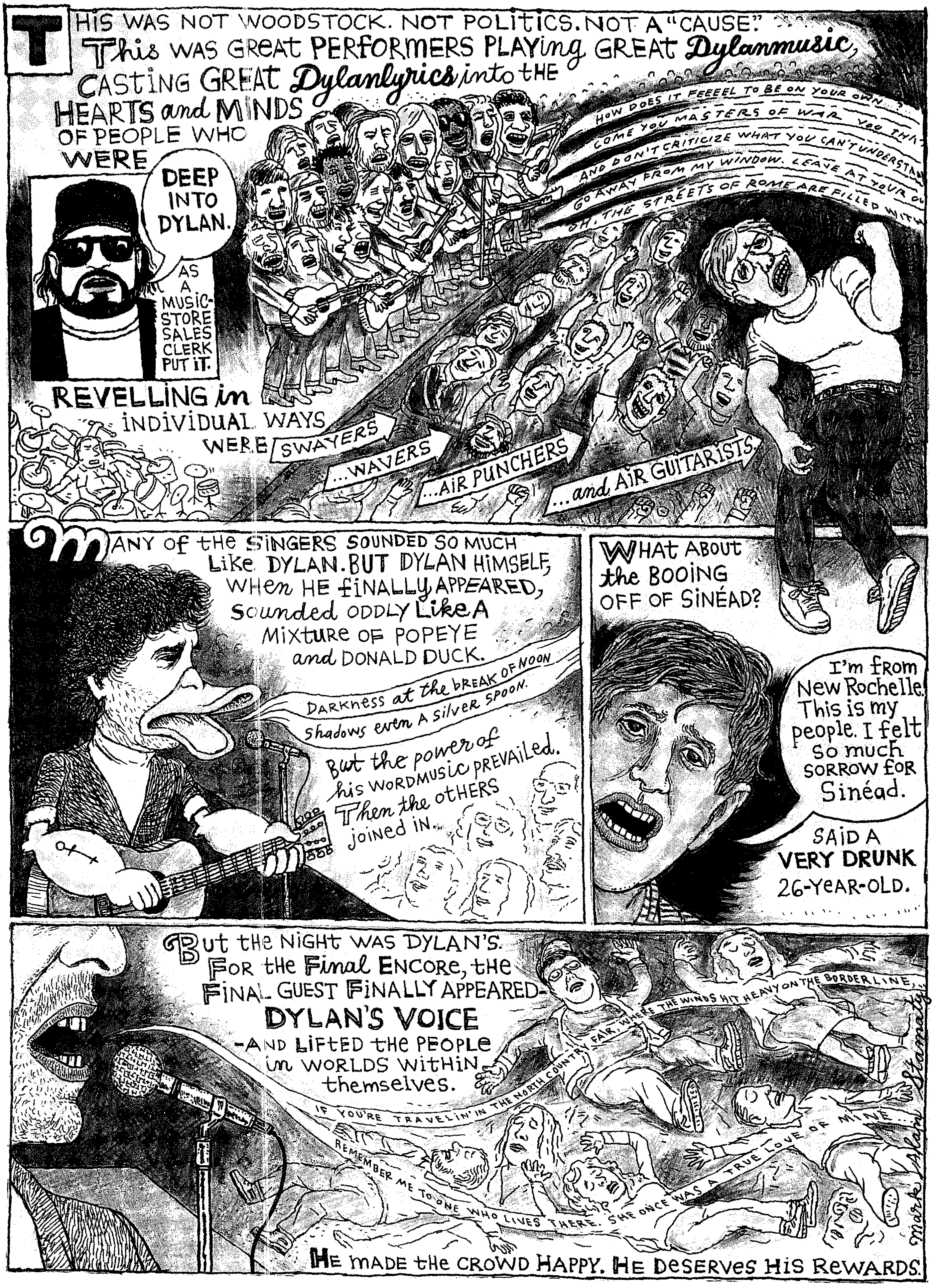
ARTIST AT LARGE

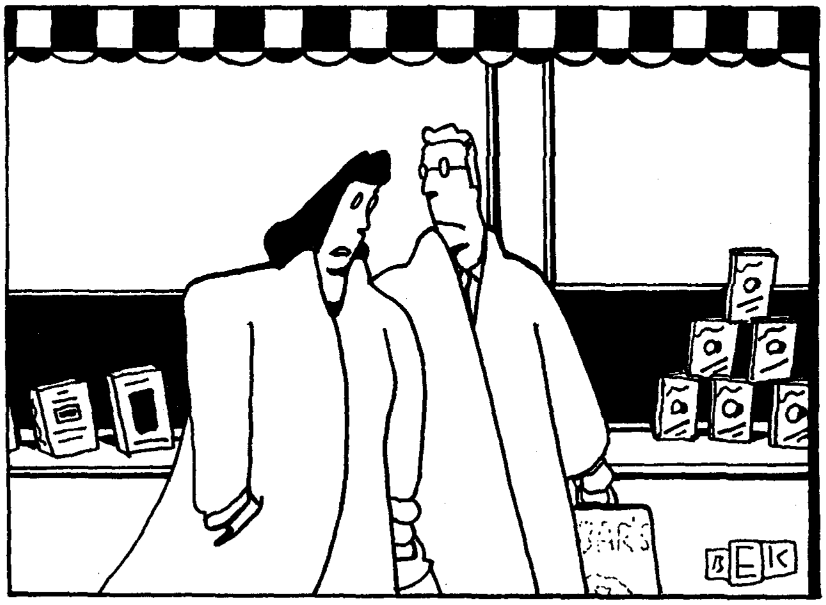
BOB DYLAN: THE HOTTEST TICKET IN TOWN

by Mark Alan Stamaty



THE CABDRIVER WAS JEALOUS.
250
DRIVER CANNOT REVERSE THE TIDE OF HISTORY.
THE DYLAN TRIBUTE?! How'd You Get tickets?! ALL HIS FANS are CALLING the RADIO complaining THEY CAN'T get 'em!
SO HOW'd THESE GUYS GET FIFTH-ROW GARDEN FLOOR SEATS?
WE WAITED on LINE FOR 6 DAYS!
HAW-HAW!
HAW-HAW!
WISEASSES MID-20s. GORGING on HEART-ATTACK FOOD.
HOW'D THESE two GET tickets?
THROUGH BUSINESS INTERMEDIARIES... That's all I'll say.
SAID DAD, 47, with DAUGHTER, 15.
THE SIXTIES ARE MAKING A COMEBACK AMONG MY GENERATION.
AND, OF COURSE, THERE WERE LOTS OF BOOMERS.
DYLAN GOT ME THROUGH...
MY TEENS.
MY TWENTIES.
BALDNESS.
MENOPAUSE.
...AND BEERBELLIES
& SHOW BIZ & MUSIC BIZZERS
...CELEBS
...OUR BOYS in UNIFORM (1992)
SOME POST-NEO-RETROS
...AND WASTEDS.
SUSAN S.
Tim R.
⇨ THIS WAS A WHITE CROWD. 99% OR MORE. ⇨


THIS WAS NOT WOODSTOCK. NOT POLITICS. NOT A "CAUSE."
This WAS GREAT PERFORMERS PLAYING GREAT Dylanmusic, CASTING GREAT Dylanlyrics into tHE HEARTS and MINDS OF PEOPLE WHO WERE
DEEP INTO DYLAN.
AS A MUSIC-STORE SALES CLERK PUT IT.
HOW DOES IT FEEEEL TO BE ON YOUR OWN...?
COME YOU MASTERS OF WAR YOU THA
AND DON'T CRITICIZE WHAT YOU CAN'T UNDERSTA
GO AWAY FROM MY WINDOW. LEAVE AT YOUR O
OH, THE STREETS OF ROME ARE FILLED WITH
REVELLING in INDIVIDUAL WAYS WERE
SWAYERS
...WAVERS
...AIR PUNCHERS
...and AIR GUITARISTS.
MANY of tHE SINGERS SOUNDED SO MUCH Like DYLAN. BUT DYLAN HIMSELF, WHEN HE FINALLY APPEARED, Sounded ODDLY LIKE A MIXTURE OF POPEYE and DONALD DUCK.
DARKNESS at the BREAK OF NOON
Shadows even A silver SPOON.
But the power of his WORDMUSIC PREVAILED. Then the OTHERS joined IN.
WHAT ABOUT the BOOING OFF OF SINÉAD?
I'm from New Rochelle. This is my people. I felt so much SORROW for Sinéad.
SAID A VERY DRUNK 26-YEAR-OLD.
But tHE NIGHT WAS DYLAN'S. FOR THE Final ENCORE, THE FINAL GUEST FINALLY APPEARED- DYLAN'S VOICE -AND LIFTED THE PEOPLE in WORLDS WITHIN themselves.
IF YOU'RE TRAVELIN' IN THE NORTH COUNTRY FAIR, WHERE THE WINDS HIT HEAVY ON THE BORDERLINE,...
REMEMBER ME TO ONE WHO LIVES THERE. SHE ONCE WAS A TRUE LOVE OF MINE...
HE MADE tHE CROWD HAPPY. HE DESERVES HIS REWARDS.
mark Alan Stamaty



"I'm tired of people who write first novels."

• •

tank, which the Soviets had sent to Baghdad as part of their aid program—Weinberger apparently saw an opening. According to classified documents disclosed earlier this year in the Los Angeles *Times*, after some negotiations Iraq agreed to give the United States the tank in exchange for four United States-origin 155-mm. self-propelled howitzers. While the covert Pentagon operators envisioned a major espionage coup against the Soviet Union, Weinberger, according to two highly placed Reagan Administration officials who knew of the operation, viewed it as an opportunity to begin direct United States arms shipments to Iraq. "Cap's view was that once the first arms shipments to Iraq were authorized by the President, the first bite of the forbidden apple had been taken, and other direct covert arms sales to Iraq would follow," a former Pentagon official explained to us.

However, the exchange fell through at the last minute, when the Iraqis, fearful that the Soviets would terminate their aid if they found out about the tank, got cold feet. Subsequently, an Iraqi offer to exchange a Soviet HIND helicopter for United States-origin weapons also fell through, because of Pentagon concerns about the criminal record of the middleman, a Lebanese-born international arms trafficker.

But there were other ways of arming Iraq. One such way—transferring arms through third countries—was outlined in a classified memo written by William L. Eagleton, the chief of the United States-interests section in Baghdad, in October, 1983. "We can selectively lift restrictions on third party transfers of U.S.-licensed military equipment to Iraq," he wrote. Even though the stated United States policy toward the Iran-Iraq War remained one of neutrality, and Congress would never have approved such arms transfers, that year the Reagan Administration began secretly allowing Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, and Egypt to transfer United States weapons, including howitzers, Huey helicopters, and bombs, to Iraq. These shipments may very well have violated the Arms Export Control Act.

Throughout 1983, Iran had made limited gains against Iraqi troops, but the real damage was being done to Iraq's infrastructure. On December 22, 1983, in a memo to Under-Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger, Assistant Secretary Murphy warned that the Iraqi regime's very survival was threatened. He wrote:

> There is the possibility, on the political side, that internal frustrations resulting from economic deprivation and a seemingly endless war may produce problems for the [Iraqi] government. . . . It is uncertain how long the status quo can be maintained by Iraq in its confrontation with a much more populous Iran as long as Iran exports three times as much oil as Iraq.

Murphy later advocated an increase in the tilt to Iraq. The most sensitive aspects of the resulting policy shift were laid out in a memo he wrote on January 14, 1984. The memo was classified "Secret," and recipients were ordered both to destroy it and to keep records of its destruction. In addition to suggesting tightening controls on the world arms flow to Iran, the memo recommended a number of military and economic measures that the United States could take to aid the Iraqi war effort. Murphy suggested allowing the export to Iraq of so-called "dual use" items—nominally civilian items that also had potential military use, such as heavy trucks, armored ambulances, and communications gear. He suggested helping Iraq build a new oil pipeline to the Jordanian port of Aqaba, on the Israeli border, which would enable Iraq to circumvent the Iranian blockade of its Persian Gulf ports. He also mentioned that the State Department wanted to provide Iraq with funds for various projects through the Export-Import Bank, whose chairman was a Reagan appointee named William Draper. The memo read, in part:

> Liberalizing export controls on Iraq: We are considering revising present policy to permit virtually all sales of non-munitions list dual use equipment to Iraq. . . .
>
> Egyptian tank sales. In the context of recommending ways to improve our relations with Iraq, Egypt has suggested that we provide it additional M-60 tanks beyond those we are now providing under FMS [Foreign Military Sales]. Egypt would use the additional M-60s to replace used Soviet T-62s, which it would sell to Iraq. . . .
>
> EXIM financing: U/S [Under-Secretary of State] Eagleburger has written EXIM director Draper to urge EXIM financing of US exports to and projects in Iraq. . . . Such major EXIM financing could boost Iraq's credit rating, leading to increased commercial financing for Iraq. However, EXIM does not favor involvement in Iraq.

The memo ended with a warning that Congress would be interested in the State Department's secret policy of aiding Iraq. As a result, background briefings for Congress would emphasize "our efforts to deter escalation and bring about a cessation of hostilities."

There is no evidence to suggest that Vice-President Bush had knowledge of the Pentagon's attempts to arm Iraq through its covert intelligence unit, or of various other attempts to arm Iraq via third countries. But other aspects of the new covert policy toward Iraq were put on the agenda of the National Security Planning Group, of which the

Vice-President was a member. According to participants in the planning group's meetings, by early 1984 Bush was participating in them as an advocate not only of the Aqaba-pipeline project but of other aspects of the covert tilt toward Iraq. In this way, his involvement in the affair now known as Iraqgate began.

Iraq's point man for the new policy was Tariq Aziz, the Foreign Minister. Two weeks after Murphy wrote the secret memo, he met Aziz in the offices of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry, a modern concrete-and-glass building in the center of Baghdad. According to Murphy, Aziz wore crisp olive-green fatigues, with a pearl-handled revolver in a holster on his belt, and he had a Cuban cigar between his teeth. Because the memory of Israel's bombing of Iraq's nuclear-development facility at Osirak two and a half years earlier was still fresh in Iraqi minds, and because the Aqaba pipeline would run along the Israeli border, Aziz demanded that the United States government provide financing for the pipeline and that American corporations have some financial stake in it. A United States stake would deter Israel from bombing the pipeline.

In a "Secret" cable dated February 3rd, Murphy reported on his meeting with Aziz, emphasizing the importance of United States participation in the Aqaba pipeline:

> Aziz stressed that because of its complex nature and the security considerations, Iraq was not interested in the project unless there was direct U.S. involvement. . . .
>
> President Hussein said that Iraq will withdraw from the Aqaba project unless there is direct U.S. involvement in the project. Aziz agreed with this formulation and repeated that if USG [the United States government] "finds difficulties" then we should "just forget it."
>
> Murphy affirmed that we agreed that the geopolitical and economic value of the project was beyond question. And that he would refer the Iraqi position to Washington for expert consideration and that he would get as precise an answer as he could as promptly as he could.

Murphy also raised the "very sensitive issue" of Iraqi use of chemical weapons against Iran:

> Aziz repeated the denials. Murphy noted the Iraqi disclaimer [and] enjoined Aziz to ensure that Iraq eliminate doubts in the international community by making their positions and explanations as clear and understandable to the international public as the allegations have been.

Seven months earlier, Iraq had begun the widespread use of lethal chemical weapons against Iranian troops. Evidence later gathered by the International Committee of the Red Cross confirmed that Iranian soldiers had been exposed to "substances prohibited by international law," including mustard gas and fungal poisons. A United States official told the New York *Times* that the Reagan Administration had had evidence that Iraq was considering the use of chemical weapons for over a year, and had privately warned Iraq about their use. Although the United States protested Iraq's use of chemical weapons, the Administration proceeded with its policy of increased economic coöperation. In November of 1984, it restored diplomatic relations with Iraq, which had broken off in 1967.

Once back in Washington, Murphy went to work to make the Aqaba pipeline a reality. One of the thorniest problems was credit. The Export-Import Bank had concluded that war-ravaged Iraq could not meet the bank's statutory requirement that it provide a "reasonable assurance of repayment." The Reagan Administration began an intense lobbying effort to get the bank to overlook its own guidelines.

On June 12th, Charles Hill, executive secretary to Secretary of State Shultz, sent a confidential memo to George Bush's office in the West Wing of the White House, suggesting that the Vice-President call Draper, the bank's chairman, and press him to provide financing for the Aqaba pipeline. Bush was a logical person for this chore, not only because of his high office but because Draper had been a classmate of his at Yale. The "talking points" prepared for Bush suggested he tell Draper that the loan affected America's vital interests and that America's goal in the Iran-Iraq War was "to bring the war to a negotiated end in which neither belligerent is dominant." Bush was to argue that the rapid completion of oil pipelines in Iraq would help accomplish these ends:

> At present time, Iran is the intransigent party, unwilling to negotiate in part because it believes it can win in a war of attrition. We must therefore seek a means to bolster Iraq's ability and resolve to withstand Iranian attacks as well as to convince Iran that continuing hostilities are useless.

Almost immediately after receiving the call from Bush, Draper reversed the previous position of the Export-Import Bank, and it now agreed to provide the financing. Because of problems obtaining insurance, the Aqaba pipeline was never built. But the attempt marked the point at which George Bush had begun to take an active role in the covert policy to tilt toward Iraq.

In Reagan's second term, the internal struggle over covert strategies exploded. The fuse was lit by Graham Fuller, the C.I.A.'s national intelligence officer for the Middle East, in two memos he wrote in May, 1985. They created a momentum that would draw Bush deeper into the melee.

For the previous two years, the Reagan Administration had conducted a program known as Operation Staunch, to stem the flow of weapons to Iran, while it continued to supply Iraq with covert aid, including top-secret satellite photographs. Fuller, with the encouragement of McFarlane, Reagan's

MAILBOX

To the Editor:

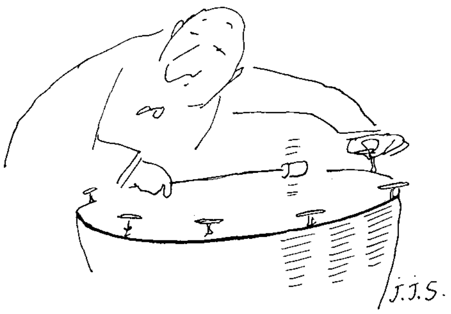
As Marshall Frady observes in "The Children of Malcolm" (October 12th), relations between Martin Luther King, Jr., and Malcolm X were never close. But there was one occasion, in 1962, more than a year before Malcolm left the Nation of Islam, when they did work together, on Local 1199's fifty-six-day strike by low-paid black and Hispanic hospital workers for union recognition in New York City.

Dr. King and Malcolm X were both scheduled to address a strike-support rally, but at the last minute Dr. King was called to a civil-rights march in Albany, Georgia, and sent a taped message to the rally. It was the only time Malcolm X identified himself with a labor union, and had Dr. King been present it would have marked the only time the two shared the same platform.

MOE FONER, Director
Local 1199's
Bread and Roses Cultural Project
New York, N.Y.

national-security adviser, and C.I.A. director Casey, argued that it was now time to change course. "Our tilt to Iraq was timely when Iraq was against the ropes and the Islamic revolution was on a roll," Fuller wrote in a draft memo to Casey on May 17th. "The time may now have to come to tilt back." Fuller contended that the United States should once again authorize Israel to ship United States arms to Iran.

In many ways, Fuller's rationale was a mirror image of the argument that Weinberger had made three years earlier: to counter the effects of one covert policy, another was needed. This time, however, a second element had to be taken into consideration. In the preceding year and a half, seven Americans had been taken hostage in Beirut by the Hezbollah, a fundamentalist Shiite terrorist group with links to Khomeini's regime. Even so, the Iran-tilters were again on the rise in Washington. On May 20th, Fuller wrote a Special National Intelligence Estimate (S.N.I.E.), a closely held memo that was circulated to the President and many of his top advisers. (Bush was not among them.) The significance of the memo is that it became the basis for renewed arms sales to Iran, and thus for the ensuing Iran-Contra scandal.



Although the memo was similar in its objectives to the one Fuller had written three days earlier, this time he was writing for a different audience—President Reagan. And Fuller's S.N.I.E. seemed perfectly designed for Reagan. "We know that the U.S.S.R. views Iran as 'the prize' in the Gulf," he wrote. "Moscow will improve relations when and where it can . . . until it gains major influence in that state. The disturbing possibility is that the U.S.S.R. is far more likely than the U.S. to be first in finding opportunities to improve its ties to Iran."

"What was resonant with Ronald Reagan was an East-West argument—the Soviet threat—not an Iraq argument," Howard Teicher told us recently. "The President would not have been so interested in the idea that our tilt toward Iraq was dangerous because Iraqi victory might cause Saddam to become the predominant military power in the region and a danger to our Gulf allies."

At the 1991 confirmation hearings on Robert Gates' appointment as the director of Central Intelligence, it was learned that Fuller's memo, which was forwarded to President Reagan, contradicted the views of career Soviet analysts at the C.I.A., who argued that the Soviets actually had no hope of making inroads into the Ayatollah's regime. The Soviets were Iraq's largest arms suppliers, and Iran was arming the Afghan Mujahedin. At the hearings, several C.I.A. analysts testified that Fuller had skewed his appraisal for political reasons. In an interview with us, Fuller readily acknowledged that his evaluation had been wrong but denied that the analysis had been politicized.

In any event, Fuller's memo became a seminal document in the initiative to arm Iran. If there is no evidence that Bush ever saw the memo, there is evidence that by midsummer of 1985 he had attended White House meetings at which arms sales to Iran were discussed, and apparently did nothing to dissuade Ronald Reagan from pursuing a policy based on politicized intelligence reports.

In the spring of 1985, the Iran-Iraq War reached a new level of destructiveness. A wave of Iranian assaults, against which the Iraqis used chemical weapons, left twenty thousand Iranians and fourteen thousand Iraqis dead. Meanwhile, the Iranian-supported Hezbollah was continuing to take American hostages. On May 28th, David P. Jacobsen, the director of the American University Hospital in Beirut, was kidnapped, and on June 9th another American, Thomas Sutherland, the dean of agriculture at the American University, was seized. In a speech on July 8th, President Reagan angrily charged that Iran was a member of a "confederation of terrorist states . . . a new, international version of Murder, Incorporated," and he made a pledge: "America will never make concessions to terrorists."

But in the White House the secret initiative to arm the Iranians was taking shape. On June 11th, two days after Sutherland's kidnapping, McFarlane's National Security Council staff drafted a Presidential directive advocating that the United States help Iran obtain selected weapons. The opposing faction was irate. Shultz protested vociferously. Weinberger wrote a memo on his reaction to the draft directive: "This is almost too absurd to comment on. . . . It's like asking Qadaffi to Washington for a cozy chat."

On July 3rd, David Kimche, the director general of Israel's Foreign Ministry, met secretly with McFarlane in the White House and informed him that Israel had succeeded in establishing a dialogue with Iran and that the Iranians might be able to use their influence with the Hezbollah to free the American hostages. All the elements were present for what would become an arms-for-hostages deal.

Throughout late July and early August, President Reagan consulted his top advisers about such a deal. Vice-President Bush was part of this group, attending a meeting on August 6th with the President, Shultz, Weinberger, Chief of Staff Donald Regan, and McFarlane. Reagan, wearing pajamas and a robe in his private quarters in the White House—he was recovering from intestinal surgery—listened as McFarlane reported, based on information he had got from the Israelis, that the Iranians wanted arms from the United States and a hundred TOW anti-tank missiles from Israel. They would release four or more hostages in return. The response was mixed. McFarlane was the most willing to go ahead with the deal, but Weinberger and Shultz were dead set against it. Records give no indication of how Bush responded to the proposal at this meeting, if he did. Recollections about this meeting are contradictory. But one thing is clear: the arms-for-hostages deal was still moving ahead; it had not been rejected.

On August 30th, Israel sold more than five hundred United States-origin TOW missiles to Iran. On September 15th, the Reverend Benjamin Weir, who had been kidnapped in Beirut more than a year earlier, was released. For all practical purposes, the first arms-for-hostages transaction had taken place. The Administration hoped other hostages would be released, too, but none were.

Meanwhile, negotiations to trade arms for the remaining hostages continued to have bureaucratic life. On December 6th, in the White House, President Reagan discussed the initiative with Weinberger, Shultz, McFarlane, and other advisers. Weinberger has said that he bluntly warned the President that the arms transfers were illegal under the Arms Export Control Act. "There was no way in which this kind of transfer could be made if that particular act governed," Weinberger later recalled.

According to Shultz, the President had answered, "Well, the American people would never forgive me if I failed to get these hostages out over this legal question." The President also made a joke: "Visiting hours are on Thursday."

Bush was not present at the December 6th meeting—he was attending the Army-Navy Game in Philadelphia—but on January 7, 1986, he joined President Reagan, Shultz, Weinberger, Casey, Regan, and John Poindexter, the new national-security adviser, at a special meeting of the National Security Council. The question was whether to permit the sale of four thousand Israeli TOW missiles in exchange for all the American hostages in Beirut. As before, Shultz and Weinberger vigorously opposed the plan. There is no record that Bush expressed any views, according to the congressional Iran-Contra committees. Bush later said he was unaware that there had been a battle between Shultz, Weinberger, and other top Administration officials over the arms sales. "I never really heard them that clearly," Bush told Ted Koppel on "Nightline" in 1988. "And the reason is that the machinery broke down—it never worked as it should. The key players with the experience weren't ever called together . . . to review the decisions that were made at a lower level."

When Bush appeared before the Tower Commission review board, in 1987, he was asked how the President could have gone ahead with the arms-for-hostages deal, contrary to the advice of Weinberger and Shultz. According to the board's notes, Bush suggested he was not sufficiently knowledgeable about the deal. "The Vice-President allowed that he found it difficult to imagine that the President should go forward in the circumstances," the notes read. "Nevertheless, he noted that the President often 'holds things pretty tight.' "

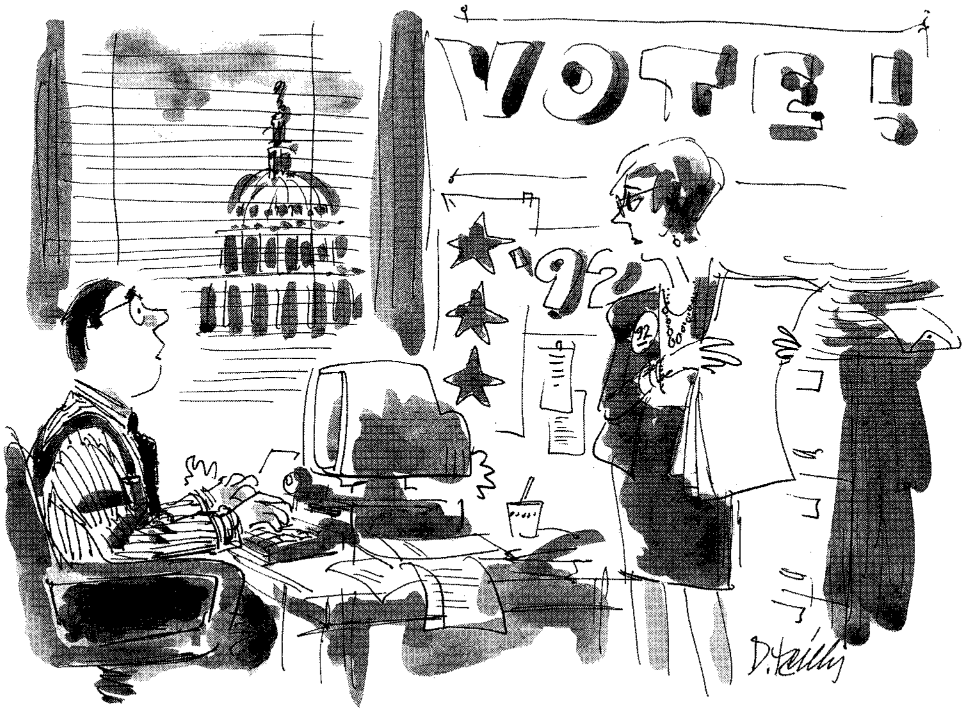
Bush did not mention the January 7th meeting. However, his chief of staff, Craig L. Fuller, told the Washington *Post* that Bush might have left that meeting early: "If he [Bush] was there for all of it, he doesn't recall it as a showdown session, and it's possible he wasn't there for all of it."

But the testimony of Weinberger and Shultz indicates that it *was* a "showdown session." In his congressional testimony, Weinberger recalled, "I made the same points" as at the December 6th meeting. "George Shultz made the same points." Shultz testified, "Secretary Weinberger and I were the only ones who were against it. And so that included everybody who was there on the other side of the issue. . . . I couldn't believe that people would want to do this." Shultz specifically included Bush among those who wanted to go ahead with the deal.

On January 17th, Bush was present during a 9:30 A.M. intelligence briefing in which President Reagan signed an authorization for the sale of the TOW missiles to Iran. After the meeting, Poindexter noted in a memo that the "President was briefed verbally from this paper," adding that Bush, among others, was present. Part of the memo read, "The secretaries [Shultz and Weinberger] do not recommend you proceed with this plan." But the memo did not register any opposition by Bush. Indeed, in a February, 1986, electronic-mail note, Poindexter wrote that the "president and VP are solid in taking the position that we have to try."

The motives of the key players were complex and varied. President Reagan was said to be so moved by the plight of the hostages that his staff kept him from meeting with any of the hostages' families. But there were political concerns as well. If a release could be arranged in time for the 1986 congressional elections, the Republicans would gain a political windfall. "We had to meet a deadline in releasing hostages, because the elections were coming up," Albert Hakim, an Iranian-born arms merchant who participated in the arms deal, told the congressional Iran-Contra committees. Oliver North, in his congressional testimony, at first denied any political motive. On being pressed, he conceded, "There are political concerns."

Before the deal could be consummated, however, one major detail had to be ironed out. The United States in-



"So essentially what you're saying is that Joe Sixpack and Joe Blow are one and the same person?"

sisted that Iran release all the hostages before the arms were delivered. The Iranians refused. A deadlock ensued. By May, there had been no concrete progress. The White House grew desperate enough to send its own delegation to Iran. The delegation consisted of McFarlane, who had resigned as national-security adviser; North; George Cave, a C.I.A. expert on Iran; and Howard Teicher. To accompany them, Israel sent Amiram Nir, a special adviser on counter-terrorism to Prime Minister Shimon Peres. The mission, which later became famous, came to naught when the Iranians insisted upon "sequencing"—releasing the hostages two at a time as arms shipments were delivered. The Iranians were angry at being charged what they believed were exorbitant prices for the weapons. (Profits from the arms sales were by now being diverted to aid the Contras.)

On May 29th, after the delegation returned to Washington, McFarlane briefed the President and the Vice-President on the trip. Teicher, who was present at the briefing, recalled to us in an interview that McFarlane "explicitly described the differences they had with the Iranian officials, explaining that it was an arms-for-hostages deal. He said that the Iranians were jerking us around and would continue to. Bush didn't say anything, but, after McFarlane said the initiative should temporarily be shut down, Reagan agreed not to proceed any longer."

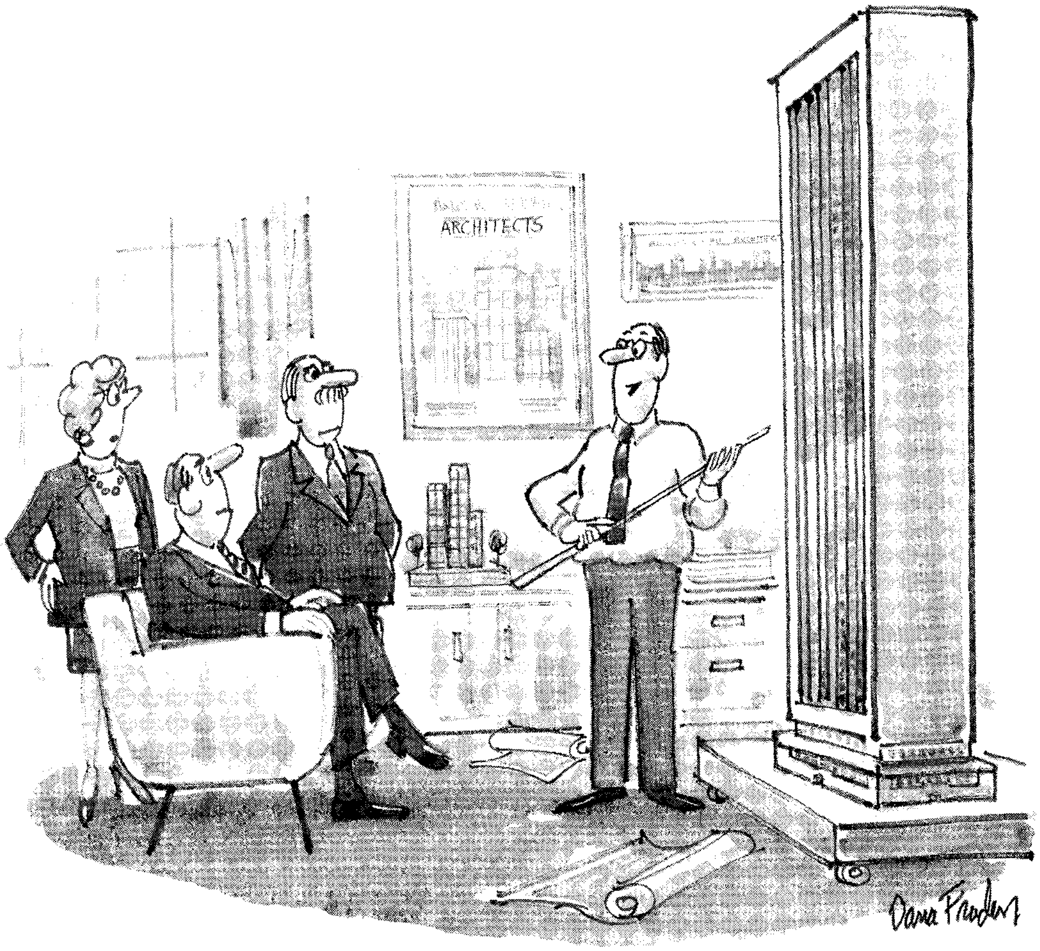
The deal was stalled. It would remain so until the entry into the drama of a player who was aware of the Administration's clandestine policies toward both Iran and Iraq, and could finesse both factions within the Administration. That player was William Casey.

"CASEY cared little about the Middle East," a former C.I.A. official who had worked closely with him told us. "But you can't forget his love of the cloak and dagger, of covert operations. He had a passion for them." That passion dated back to the Second World War, when Casey ran covert operations behind the lines in Nazi-occupied Europe for the Office of Strategic Services, the C.I.A.'s precursor. On the particulars of the Middle East, Casey was guided by a Cold War perspective. "Everything was viewed through the prism of combatting the Soviets," Teicher told us. "The Iraqis were seen as a bastion of Soviet influence and as a window to peer in on Soviet defense technology. Better relations with Iran through arms sales was also seen as a way of countering the Soviets."

As Ronald Reagan's campaign manager in 1980, Casey, who thought Bush too liberal and too soft, had reluctantly gone along with his selection as Vice-President. Immediately after Reagan's inauguration, however, the new C.I.A. chief decreed that Vice-President Bush would play no role in intelligence. "He was adamant," Admiral Bobby Ray Inman, the agency's deputy director under Casey, recalled. "Once, I met with Bush anyway. When Casey found out about it, he exploded: 'Why the hell are you seeing Bush?' " But within a few years whatever reservations Casey had had about Bush had dissipated. "George is with us more often than you think," Casey confided to William Safire in 1983. "He plays his cards close to his vest, but he's not the wimp we thought he was."

All through Bush's political life, journalists and colleagues have spoken of Bush as if he were two people. One was the accommodating and acquiescent attendant upon those who had higher rank and greater power. The other was the ruthless politician, who would go into "campaign mode" to do whatever it might take to win. Casey confided to his colleagues that he felt that the two sides of Bush were really one and the same. The Vice-President had the capacity to act on the judgment of others, to live within the contraints of their agendas. This philosophy had served him well in the long line of appointive offices he had won. Casey, according to his colleagues, understood that Bush's compliant nature, like his merciless side, served a higher ambition. In any case, it was Bush he chose to carry out his secret mission to break the impasse that had stalled the release of the hostages. As we have noted, Casey, according to two aides who worked with him at the C.I.A., reasoned that if Iraq escalated the air war Iran would have a renewed need for United States weapons, and that would force it to conclude the stalled arms-for-hostages deal on acceptable terms. Casey, these aides say, was keeping some Administration officials in the dark about the double nature of his plan, and was trying to enlist the support of officials at the State Department and in the Pentagon who feared an imminent Iranian victory.

DOG WALKER TO THE STARS



"And, yet another plus, it will block out the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays from a considerable portion of the city."

Personally, he was convinced that although Iran had made recent gains in the war there would be a stalemate for several years. Rather than share that conviction, however, he slanted intelligence assessments to paint a graver picture of Saddam Hussein's future, even though the situation was grim enough for Iraq that such exaggerations were unnecessary.

On July 23, 1986, the C.I.A. director's scheme to break the logjam in the negotiations surfaced in the agenda of a meeting of the Contingency Pre-Planning Group (C.P.P.G.), an interagency committee consisting of mid-level representatives of the National Security Council, the Departments of State and Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the C.I.A. The meeting focussed on Iraq's misfortunes in the war, and formed the basis of a secret State Department memorandum that was cabled to diplomats in Middle East capitals and elsewhere. Near the top of the version that was sent to Baghdad, which was later made available to us, are the words "For Ambassador from NEA Murphy"—Richard Murphy, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs. In an interview last month, Murphy, who is now a senior fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, said he did not recall the memo.

The first of five numbered paragraphs in the memo stated "Secret—Entire Text." Next, the memo noted that the C.P.P.G. had been "tasked with preparing an action agenda" aimed at "bolstering our commercial/financial relationship with Iraq." The group, having reviewed Iraq's dire financial situation, had been unable to come up with an immediate, short-term solution. The group had discussed the "possibility of Iraq's 'borrowing' U.S.-supplied Jordanian equipment," but that alternative had been dismissed, because "any such transfer has to be notified to the Congress and thus made public."

The memo's final paragraph, which coincided with Casey's plan, had its roots in the frustration felt by some at Iraq's failure to take full advantage of its powerful Air Force. "Iraq didn't understand modern warfare," Richard Murphy told us. "The Iraqis were fighting the way Germans might have in the First World War. They were good at holding a defense line, which is useful in holding back the human waves of Iranians. But when it came to their Air Force they were inept. On bombing missions, in particular, the Iraqis were so afraid to lose planes that they often didn't undertake missions, and when they did they did only things that were safe." In the view of the State Department, the Iraqi Air Force not only had failed to take advantage of its technical air superiority but did not even seem to know where to strike.

In February, to induce Iraq to carry out more bombing operations, the Reagan Administration had secretly authorized Saudi Arabia to transfer United States-origin bombs to Iraq and encouraged the Saudis to provide Saddam with British fighter planes as well. Later that month, according to classified reports, Saudi Arabia transferred fifteen hundred MK-84 bombs to Iraq. But, to the dismay of United States officials, Saddam had failed to make full use of the bombs.

On Friday, July 25th, Vice-President Bush was leaving for Israel and the Middle East. On his visit, he would meet with the heads of state of Jordan and Egypt. The final paragraph of the C.P.P.G. memo said, "We have encouraged the Vice-President to suggest to both King Hussein and President Mubarak that they sustain their efforts to convey our shared views to Saddam regarding Iraq's use of its air resources," and then it immediately expressed uncertainty about whether Bush would succeed. "The very recent report . . . from Amman on that subject leads us to conclude that Saddam may not be open to suggestion." Saddam, Administration officials say, had been distrustful of the United States even though he needed U.S. resources for his deteriorating position in the war. The memo also alluded to the ongoing bureaucratic debate over the question of whether the strategic military advice Bush was passing on through intermediaries should be reinforced by "a senior U.S. emissary," who would be sent to meet with Saddam, to pass on the same message directly. The memo said, "We in NEA are in essential agreement with your reaction to the proposal to send a senior U.S. emissary to talk with Saddam Hussein. The idea still has an active bureaucratic life, however." We have not been able to determine whether the Reagan Administration ever did in fact send an emissary to talk directly with Saddam.

HOWARD TEICHER and Oliver North briefed the Vice-President before he left for the Middle East. They met him in Bush's offices in the old Executive Office Building. The date of the meeting is uncertain. "We told him what the status was, that arms had gone to Iran," Teicher recalled in an interview. "We were preparing him for a possible briefing by either the Prime Minister or Nir"—Shimon Peres and his counter-terrorism adviser. "We didn't want him to discuss it with anyone else, for security reasons. He asked us some questions, but he didn't express any opinions."

It is unclear how much Casey had told Reagan about Bush's mission, but he apparently was forthcoming with the Vice-President. Before Bush left for the Middle East, two of Casey's aides say, he went to Casey's third-floor corner office, overlooking Seventeenth and F Streets. (The meeting probably took place on July 23rd.) Both men knew that Reagan wanted the hostages released, and before the congressional election. Bush has denied that he ever discussed the arms sales to Iran with Casey. "Casey didn't talk to me about anything," he told the Washington *Post*. "The C.I.A. Director doesn't report to the Vice-President." But a former C.I.A. aide who says that Casey confided in him about the meeting told us, "Casey felt Bush had a methodical, orderly manner for the task. He had great confidence in him to carry it out. He said he briefed Bush in great detail about the initiative to bomb Iran." According to the former aide, Casey explained that the renewed bombing would create a new demand by Iran for weaponry.

WHEN Vice-President Bush boarded Air Force Two for Israel, Jordan, and Egypt, he was accompanied by his wife, several aides, more than a dozen reporters, and a television crew hired, by his political-action committee, to shoot footage of his prowess as a world leader. During his visit to Israel, Bush said the purpose of the trip was to "advance the peace process," and the day before the trip started one Bush aide had told a reporter for the *Times*, "I don't think it's sensible to talk in terms of dramatic initiatives. In fact, I would play that down."

"This is not a trip designed to establish new breakthroughs," another adviser to the Vice-President said. "It's like tending a garden. If you don't tend the garden, the weeds grow up. And I think there are a lot of weeds in that garden."

While Bush was in flight, there was a break in the hostage crisis: the Reverend Lawrence Jenco was released and flown to Germany. By coincidence, the Vice-President's first stop was in Germany, and on his arrival he spoke with Jenco by phone. Jenco's release was a measure of Iran's deep ambivalence about the negotiations. Iran needed weapons and did not want the deal to die. At the same time, the Iranians were apoplectic because, according to their estimates, they were being overcharged by six hundred per cent, and they had not yet received parts for two hundred and forty Hawk missiles. On July 29th, Oliver North warned his superior, John Poindexter, that if the parts were not delivered soon "one American hostage will probably be killed in order to demonstrate displeasure." (Iran did receive the parts, in return for Jenco's release.)

In a schedule dominated by photo opportunities—thirty-five of them in Israel alone—the Vice-President found time on the morning of July 29th for a half-hour meeting with Amiram Nir at the King David Hotel, in Jerusalem. Nir, then thirty-seven, was a war hero who had been a correspondent for Israeli television before rising to become one of Peres's top advisers. With a patch over one eye that was evocative of Moshe Dayan and other Israeli war heroes, Nir was a charismatic figure. He had known Oliver North since October, 1985, when the two men worked closely together on operations to intercept an Egyptian plane carrying four terrorists who had hijacked the Achille Lauro. He and North had so many similarities that in Tel Aviv, after the Iran-Contra revelations, Israeli journalists referred to the two men as "the Siamese twins." Nir worked closely on the hostage question with North, who referred to him affectionately as "Ami." At crucial points in the negotiations, Nir sometimes drove his tank to the nearest telephone pole, tapped into a line, and called North, without regard for the time difference between Israel and Virginia.

It was North who had arranged for Nir to brief Bush. The only other person present at the meeting was Bush's chief of staff, Craig Fuller. Of the three, only Bush did not write a contemporaneous account of it. But the Vice-President did give his version in a conversation with investigators for the Tower Commission. "Vice-President Bush related that his discussion with Mr. Nir was generally about counter-terrorism," the commission report noted. "There was no discussion of specifics relating to arms going to the Iranians."

In the 1988 interview with Ted Koppel on "Nightline," Bush slightly amended his account of the briefing. He now admitted that there was some discussion of arms sales as a means to "reach out to moderate elements" in the Iranian government. Arms sales would "establish bona fides" with the moderate element, who "might use their influence with the people who were holding the hostages."

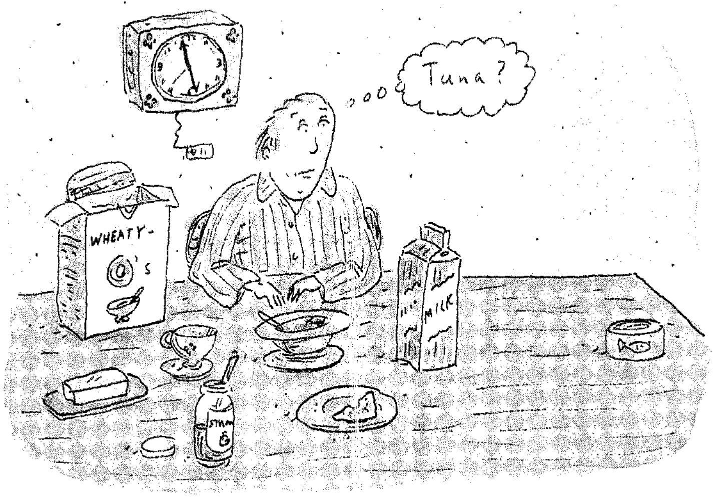
However, other accounts contradict Bush. His own chief of staff described the meeting in detail in a memorandum for the record. In the first paragraph of his memo, which was obtained and published by the Tower Commission, Fuller summarized what Nir had told Bush:

> Mr. Nir . . . reviewed what had been learned which was essentially that the radical group was the group that could deliver. He reviewed the issues to be considered—

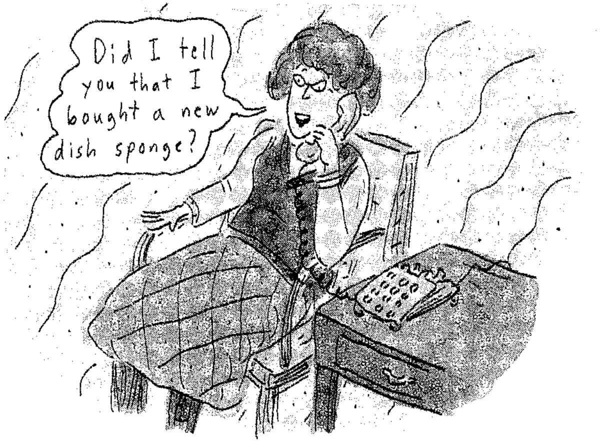
GETTING IN STEP WITH

THE GLOBAL SLOWDOWN

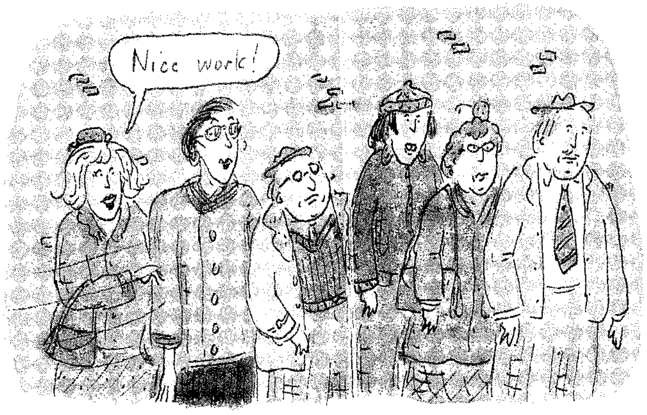
Try to stretch breakfast out till half an hour before lunch.


Tuna?
WHEATY-O's
MILK

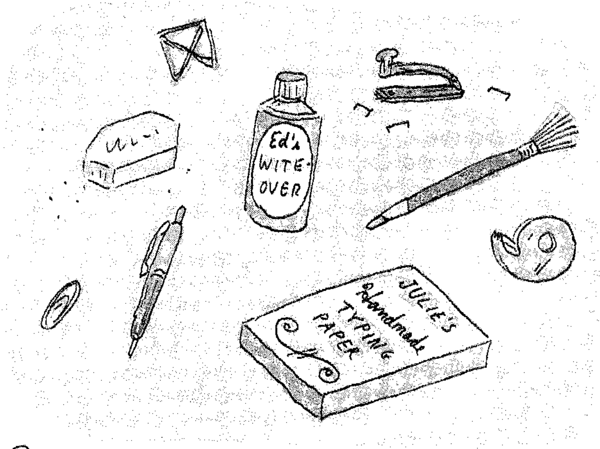
When talking on the telephone, never, *ever* be the person who has to get off first.


Did I tell you that I bought a new dish sponge?

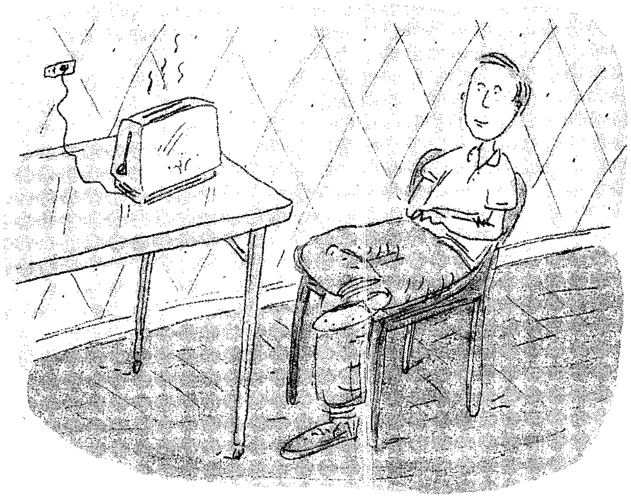
If someone butts in front of you in line, say thank you.



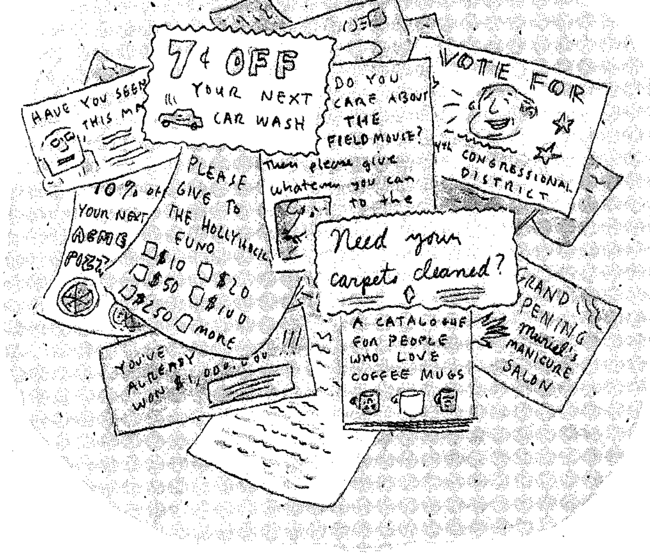
Make your own office supplies from scratch.


Ed's WITE-OVER
JULIE'S Handmade TYPING PAPER

Take the time to keep your toaster company as it performs its little task.



Open and *read* all your junk mail.


HAVE YOU SEEN THIS MA
7¢ OFF YOUR NEXT CAR WASH
DO YOU CARE ABOUT THE FIELD MOUSE? Then please give whatever you can to the
VOTE FOR
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
10% off YOUR NEXT PIZZ
PLEASE GIVE TO THE HOLLYHOCK FUND
☐ $10 ☐ $20 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $250 ☐ more
Need your carpets cleaned?
GRAND OPENING Muriel's MANICURE SALON
YOU'VE ALREADY WON $1,000,000
A CATALOGUE FOR PEOPLE WHO LOVE COFFEE MUGS

R. Chast

> namely that there needed to be a decision as to whether the items requested would be delivered in separate shipments or whether we would continue to press for the release of the hostages prior to delivering the items in an amount agreed to previously.

Elsewhere in the memo Fuller quoted Nir as telling Bush that at a meeting between Israelis and Iran's Prime Minister Hussein Moussavi "an agreement was made on 4,000 units," meaning missiles, "1,000 first and then 3,000. The agreement was made on the basis that we would get the group," meaning hostages, "for a fixed price."

Nir himself described the meeting in a confidential memo to Prime Minister Peres. Nir's memo, which was disclosed on "Nightline" three weeks ago, confirmed Fuller's written account, and contradicted Bush's claims about reaching out to "moderate elements." Nir's memo pointed out that "the elements in Iran with whom we talk most of the time, Prime Minister Moussavi and his deputy or assistant Mohsen Kangerlou, are clearly the most extreme."

Yet no one had resolved the most difficult question of all. Jenco's release showed not only that the radicals could deliver but that they were serious about sequencing the release of the hostages in exchange for arms. "What are the alternatives to sequencing?" Nir asked Bush. "They fear if they gave up all the hostages they won't get anything from us."

"The VP made no commitments nor did he give any direction to Nir," Bush's chief of staff noted in his memo.

THE next day, Bush was off to Jordan for a three-day visit, during which he met twice with King Hussein. In Amman, the Jordanians provided lavish spreads of caviar and smoked salmon for the travelling press. Bush's aides began referring to the trip as a tourist event. The Los Angeles *Times* quoted "knowledgeable U.S. officials" as saying that the Arab portion of the trip was planned primarily to offer the "best camera angles and interesting backdrops" for photographing Bush. Even a senior aide conceded that the trip accomplished little of substance. "Join the Bush campaign and see the world," the aide cracked to a reporter.

The trip did generate a certain comic relief. Once the Bush party arrived in Amman, it demanded that camels be present at every stop—even though camels are a rarity in Jordan, where cars and buses are the customary means of transportation. The Bush team suggested that Jordan stage military maneuvers to provide dramatic footage, not realizing that Syria or Israel might mistake them for real hostilities. Aides then tried to arrange for Bush to be photographed peering through binoculars at "enemy territory," until it was pointed out that the territory in question was Israel's. After a briefing on the military situation, Bush turned to the Jordanian Commander-in-Chief, Lieutenant General Zeid Bin Shaker. "Tell me, General, how dead is the Dead Sea?" the Vice-President asked. "Very dead, sir," the General gravely replied.

On a serious note, the New York *Times* reported that Bush had suggested a face-to-face meeting between Peres and King Hussein, and that the proposal had fallen flat. A more important reason for Bush's meeting with King Hussein was not included in briefings for the press. The King had often been an intermediary between the Reagan Administration and Iraq. As early as 1982, when the C.I.A. had begun to pass military intelligence to Iraq, it had used the Jordanians as intermediaries, to provide both the United States and Iraq with "deniability." Lately, Jordan had been transferring American arms to Iraq, as part of the clandestine arrangements. According to two Reagan Administration officials, Bush now told the King that Iraq needed to be more aggressive in the war with Iran and asked that Saddam Hussein be urged to use his Air Force against targets inside Iran, because United States intelligence had concluded that if Saddam did not act more vigorously Iran might win. "The Vice-President forcefully and clearly expressed his view to the King," one of the officials, who was familiar with the Amman meeting, told us. "The King pledged that he would pass along the message."

On August 4th, Bush had a meeting in Cairo with President Hosni Mubarak, during which he told the Egyptian leader, according to news reports,

"It would appear that the sequinned youngster is preparing to challenge the authority of the silver-backed alpha male."

that the Reagan Administration could not increase aid to Egypt. In fact, according to the two Administration officials, Bush asked Mubarak to pass on to Saddam Hussein the same military advice he had given the King: that Iraq use its Air Force more aggressively. By this time, the National Security Agency, which was monitoring Jordanian-Iraqi diplomatic communications, had found that the Jordanians had already passed along the military advice "at the highest authority," according to an Administration official familiar with the covert initiative.

During the forty-eight hours that followed George Bush's meeting with Mubarak, the Iraqi Air Force flew three hundred and fifty-nine missions. What is significant, though, is that the Iraqis changed the pattern of their strikes. According to United States intelligence officials, over the next few weeks Iraqi planes struck deep into Iran, and bombed oil refineries, including, for the first time, the Sirri Island facilities, four hundred miles from the border—a daring feat for the Mirage pilots, who risked running out of fuel.

In the past, Saddam had rejected similar United States advice to escalate the bombing. His generals had been unwilling to risk their pilots and planes, and Saddam was reluctant to press them. But by 1986 the war was going so badly for Iraq that Saddam desperately needed American money and weapons. Now, in early August of 1986, when Bush was in the Middle East, C.I.A. officials in Baghdad for the first time began directly providing the Iraqi military with highly classified tactical intelligence information. The C.I.A also provided Saddam with equipment to receive intelligence information from satellites, which would help him assess the effects of his air strikes on Iran. According to one official, the intelligence provided to the Iraqis during and after the summer of 1986 "was specific to assisting them in their air war." Saddam's suspicions of the United States may have been eased somewhat by the involvement of an emissary as highly placed as the American Vice-President.

"I know what women want. Her lawyer told me."

• •

ON August 5th, Bush returned to Washington and was debriefed by Casey. "Casey kept the return briefing very close to his vest," one of his aides says. "But he said Bush was supportive of the initiative and had carried out his mission."

On the same day, however, the covert machinations almost came undone. Low-level American Embassy officials in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, had learned of the Saudi transfer of United States arms to Iraq earlier that year. Unaware that the Reagan Administration had secretly authorized the arms transfer, the officials went so far as to question Prince Bandar Ibn Sultan, the Saudi Ambassador to the United States, who told them that the transfer had been accidental and the amount had been small. The day Bush returned to Washington, the State Department sent a secret cable seeking further information about the bomb sales to Saddam. The cable warned that the Arms Export Control Act required the State Department to report the arms transfer to Congress. It said, "We shall be forwarding such notification in the next few days in classified letters to the Speaker of the House and the Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee." Exposure of the arms transfer could have had significant consequences for Saudi Arabia. President Reagan had recently notified Congress that he intended to transfer the first of five AWACS planes, worth $3.5 billion, to the Saudis. The State Department cable warned that the AWACS sales could be endangered by disclosure of the Saudis' arms transfer. It added:

> We are concerned, naturally, about possible reactions to this unauthorized transfer. Section 3 provides for the possibility of a presidential determination of ineligibility of such a country for further FMS credits and guarantees, although Department has always taken the posture the President is not required to do so. The same section also gives the Congress the opportunity, by adoption of a Joint Resolution, to declare a country ineligible for FMS sales. This is a possibility we must treat seriously given the previous debate on arms sales.

In the end, the Reagan Administration had little to worry about. The White House sent a notification letter to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Richard Lugar, claiming that the arms sales were "inadvertent," that only a "small quantity of unsophisticated weapons" had been transferred, and that the transfers were "unauthorized." In fact, the sales were done purposefully; the Administration knew that fifteen hundred bombs had been sold to Iraq; and, most important, the sales had been covertly authorized by the Reagan Administration.

One senator said he approached Lugar about rumors that Saudi Arabia was sending United States arms to Iraq. "Dick Lugar told me there was nothing to it, and so I took his word," the senator told us. There the matter ended. The senator said that Lugar told him he was relying on the word of the White House.

On September 19, 1986, Ali Hashemi Bahramani, a high-ranking officer in the Iranian Revolutionary Guards, came to Washington for secret negotiations with Oliver North, who hoped to open a "second channel" to Iran. Bahramani arrived with a shopping list, which seems to suggest that the Bush mission had had its intended effect. The bombing of the Iranian interior had created an urgent need for United States weapons to repel Iraqi attacks. Among the items Bahramani wanted were radar, Hawk missiles, and TOW missiles.

However, the fatal flaw in the reasoning behind the arms-for-hostages deal had already become apparent. As hostages were released, new ones were seized. On September 9th, Frank H. Reed, director of the Lebanese International School, was kidnapped by the Hezbollah. Three days later, Joseph Cicippio, the acting comptroller of the American University in Beirut, was kidnapped. Six weeks later, Edward Tracy, an American writer, was seized.

According to Richard Secord, who assisted Oliver North, intelligence reports indicated that the group of Iranians negotiating the release of the hostages was also responsible for taking the new hostages. But this didn't seem to deter North, Poindexter, and Casey from continuing the Iranian initiative. An incentive for them to continue was that by now at least $3.8 million of profits from the arms sales to Iran had been diverted to finance the covert Contra war.

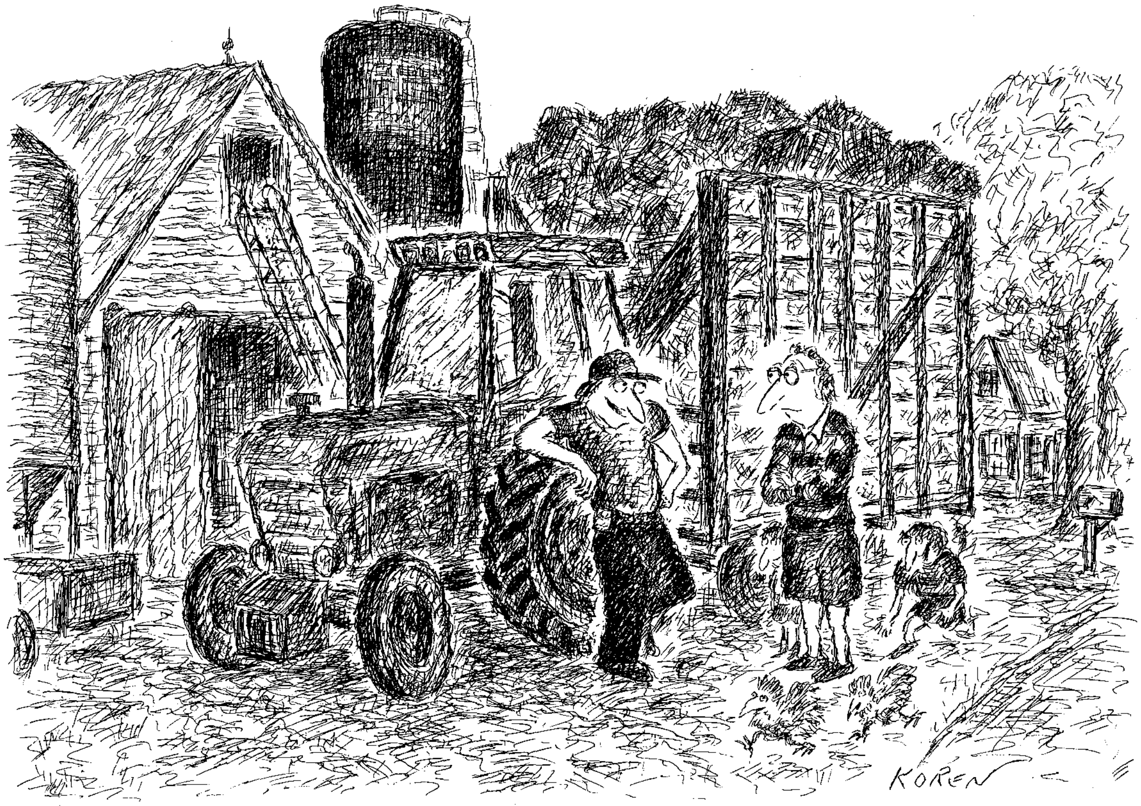
In early October, though, the negotiations between North and Bahramani reached another impasse. The American side again needed leverage. Around this time, according to knowledgeable Reagan Administration officials, William Casey secretly met with both Iraqi Foreign Minister Tariq Aziz and Nizaar Hamdoon, the Iraqi Ambassador to the United States, at the United Nations, and asked if Iraqi military officers had been satisfied with the intelligence that had been provided. He urged the Iraqis to intensify the bombing of economic targets deep inside Iranian territory.

The Iranians, faced with new Iraqi air strikes, now needed weapons more than ever and were soon back at the negotiating table. But, on October 5th, the web of covert operations began to unravel. A C-123 transport plane, part of the White House's covert arms-resupply operation for the Contras, was shot down over Nicaraguan territory. The lone survivor, a cargo hauler named Eugene Hasenfus, was captured by the Sandinistas, and began telling tales about the White House's involvement in assisting the Contras. On November 2nd, two days before the midterm congressional elections, a single hostage, David Jacobsen, was released from captivity.

The very next day, in Beirut, *Al Shiraa* broke the story of the Reagan Administration's arms shipments to Iran. On November 4th, the New York *Times* and the Washington *Post* reported the allegations about the arms sales. Three weeks later, on November 25th, Attorney General Edwin Meese held a press conference to inform the nation that profits from arms sales to Iran had been diverted to arm the Contras.

In the aftermath of the Iran-Contra revelations, McFarlane, North, Poindexter, and most of the other key officials who had favored tilting toward Iran left the White House, and their rivals had a clear field. The Reagan Administration, in its closing days, leaned strongly toward Iraq.

One of the unintended consequences of Bush's secret mission was that Iraq now needed more help than ever, in part because Iran was now being covertly provided with arms by intermediaries acting on behalf of the United States. On January 9, 1987, in response to the Iraqi bombing raids, Iran mounted one of its most sustained, and bloodiest, operations of the war. The greater part of the fighting



"I've done my tour of duty on Wall Street."

took place outside Basra, Iraq's second-largest city. Between twenty-five and thirty-five thousand troops are estimated to have died, on both sides, and as many were wounded. Iraq responded to the Iranian ground offensive with an unprecedented bombing campaign, hitting ten Iranian cities, including Teheran and the holy city of Qum, and killing thousands. The Iranians retaliated by shelling Basra. Air strikes against civilian centers had now become routine.

THE LAST DAY

It is on the last day
the renters next door
move out into the most

picturesque part of the back yard
with their cameras. Their cars
packed, sheets stripped

from the lumpy summer beds,
the plates cleaned, and the trash
carted to the dump, called here

on Harpswell Sound
the Strawberry Creek Recycling Center.
The good season seems to be

waning, even as the automatic
cameras snap to attention.
The family *groups*, forms

a moving sequence of still
lives on the rented summer lawn
that precedes the bay,

which in turn precedes
open ocean. Like the splitting
of atoms, one member

leaves the group to take over
the camera, sending back another
to the nucleus of the departing

family. The sun is directly
overhead, the wind slight
but autumnal. They have waited

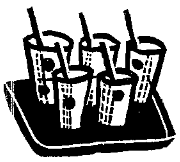
for the last day of summer,
this last moment a second thought
designated to stand for everything.

Finally the family dog barks.
He's only responding to transition,
which he regards with anticipation—

he's a retrieving dog
and anticipates going home,
home, where the bone is.

—Daniel Halpern

Iraq desperately needed American aid. On February 26th, the State Department sent a memo, classified "Confidential," to Bush's national-security adviser, Donald P. Gregg, who is now Ambassador to South Korea. The memo was intended to prepare the Vice-President for a March 2nd meeting with Nizaar Hamdoon, the Iraqi Ambassador, and was accompanied by "talking points" for Bush to use in conversations first with John Bohn, the new chairman of the Export-Import Bank, and then with Hamdoon. "Iraqi Ambassador Hamdoon is calling on me soon," Bush's first script read, "and I expect him to raise the issue of short-term Exim credit insurance for Iraq. . . . I urge you and your colleagues on the Board to give that favorable consideration. . . . Exim's support for continued trade with Iraq would be a powerful timely signal . . . of U.S. interest in stability in the Gulf."



The bank's economists had already concluded that Iraq had little chance of repaying the loan. Nevertheless, Bohn agreed to Bush's request, overriding the advice of the bank's professional staff, and when the Vice-President met with Hamdoon he was able to relay the good news. He was scripted to say, the memo notes, "I am pleased that Commerce has recently issued licenses for some long pending items"—high-technology exports—"for Iraq. You should take that as a sign of our seriousness in addressing the issue." Many of those items, it is now known, were examples of dual-use technology—helpful to Iraq's programs to develop ballistic missiles, chemical weapons, and nuclear weapons.

By this time, the Iran-Contra investigations were under way in Congress. But one of the key witnesses, William Casey, was unable to appear; he was in Georgetown Hospital, being treated for a malignant brain tumor. He died on May 6th. Amiram Nir, who was also expected to be a witness in the Iran-Contra trials, died in the crash of a small plane in Mexico in 1988.

Meanwhile, Vice-President Bush was trying to escape the political fallout of the Iran-Contra disclosures. He told the Washington *Post* that he had not been aware that serious objections were raised by Shultz and Weinberger to selling weapons to Iran. "If I had sat there, and heard George Shultz and Cap express it strongly, maybe I would have had a stronger view. But when you don't know something it's hard to react. . . . We were not in the loop."

On August 6, 1987, the day the *Post* article appeared, Weinberger telephoned Shultz, incredulous that Bush had denied knowledge. "He was on the other side," Weinberger said, according to notes taken by Shultz's executive secretary, Charles Hill. "It's on the record! Why did he say that?"

More recently, Howard Teicher, the former National Security Council adviser who worked closely with Casey and Bush on the covert arms sales, has come forward to dispute Bush's story. "Bush definitely knew almost everything about the Iranian arms-sales initiative," Teicher told us. "I personally briefed him in great detail many times. Like so many others, he got premature Alzheimer's after the arms sales became public."

As it happens, Weinberger, who argued so vociferously against the Iranian initiative, and warned of its illegality, now finds himself in the greatest legal jeopardy from the Iran-Contra scandal. He is accused by a federal grand jury of perjury and obstruction of justice relating to his withholding of notes of White House meetings from federal investigators.

On August 20, 1988, a ceasefire between Iran and Iraq went into effect. Five days later, Saddam Hussein began to stage poison-gas attacks on villages in Iraqi Kurdistan. A September, 1988, report by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee states, "Those who were very close to the bombs died instantly. Those who did not die instantly found it difficult to breathe and began to vomit. The gas stung the eyes, skin, and lungs of the villagers exposed to it. Many suffered temporary blindness. . . . Those who could not run from the growing smell, mostly the very old and the very young, died."

Around the same time, a highly classified memo was circulated to senior State Department officials by John Whitehead, then the Deputy Secretary of State, which recommended developing even closer ties to Iraq despite the end of the Iran-Iraq War. Whitehead offered a Cold War rationale: "[Soviet] clout and influence is on a steady rise as the Gulf Arabs gain self-confidence and Soviet diplomacy gains in sophistication. The Soviets have strong cards to play: their border with Iran and their arms supply relationship with Iraq. They will continue to be major players and we should engage them as fully as possible."

When Bush became President, in January, 1989, he increased aid to the regime of Saddam Hussein. Why, after the end of the Iran-Iraq War, the Reagan and Bush Administrations accelerated their support for Saddam has never been fully explained. But classified documents and interviews with senior officials indicate that the relationship between the United States and Saddam Hussein became strained after the revelations that the Reagan Administration had also sent arms to Iran. "We had to work doubly hard to recoup the stature we lost with Saddam," one official told us in an interview. As Whitehead had written in his memo, "It should be remembered . . . that we have weathered Irangate." More would need to be done to develop closer ties with "the ruthless but pragmatic Saddam Hussein."

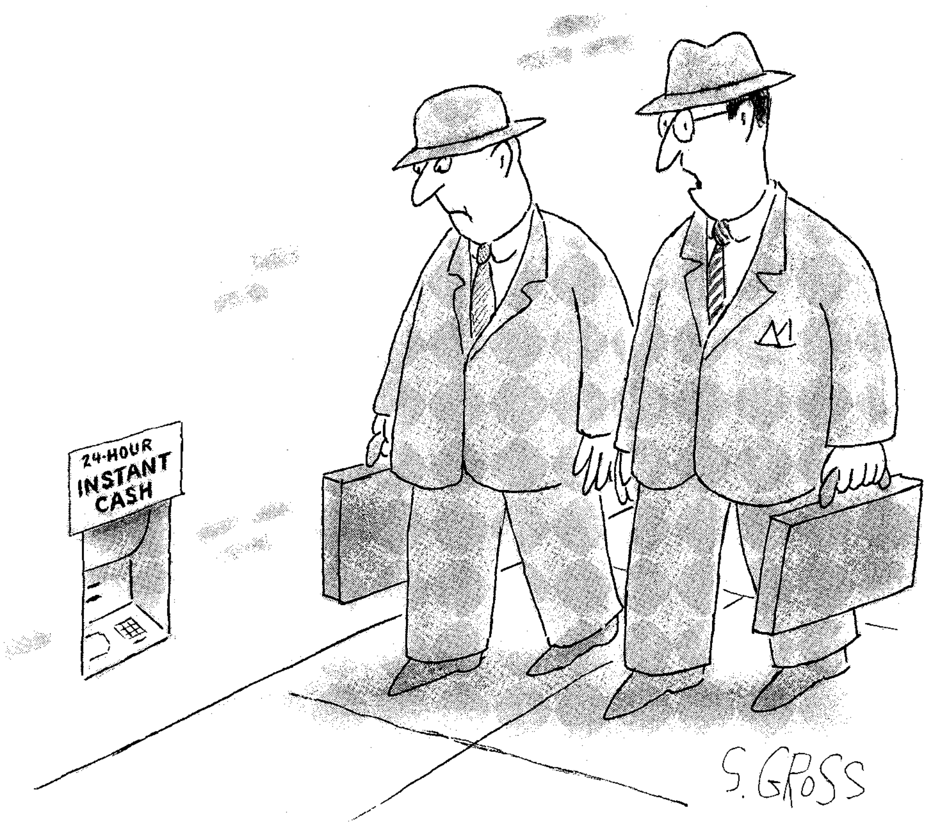
Once again, a failed covert policy—in this case, to arm Iran—led to another: increased covert support for Iraq that would facilitate its crash program to develop ballistic, chemical, and even nuclear weapons. Bush implemented the new policy despite the fact that several government departments had repeatedly warned of Saddam's massive military buildup, human-rights violations, and continued support for terrorism. In March, 1989, State Department officials told the new Secretary of State, James Baker, that Iraq was working on chemical and biological weapons and that terrorists were still operating out of Iraq. In June, the Defense Intelligence Agency sent a top-secret report to thirty-eight high-level Bush Administration officials, warning that it had discovered a secret military-procurement network for Iraq operating in countries around the world, including the United States. In September, the Defense Department discovered that an Iraqi front company in Cleveland was funnelling United States technology to Iraq's nuclear-weapons program, but the Bush Administration allowed the company to continue operations—even after the invasion of Kuwait. On September 3rd, a C.I.A. assessment, classified "Top Secret," informed Baker that Iraq had a program to develop nuclear weapons and had "made use of covert techniques" to obtain the high technology it needed to build a bomb. The report identified some of the specific dual-use technology that Baghdad's procurement network was trying to obtain around the world for its nuclear-weapons program, including oscilloscopes, high-speed cameras, and centrifuges.

Bernard Schoenbaum

In spite of these warnings, on October 2nd President Bush signed a top-secret National Security Directive that authorized closer diplomatic relations with Iraq and opened the way for additional aid. Four days later, Secretary Baker met with his Iraqi counterpart, Tariq Aziz, and promised him that the Bush Administration would not tighten restrictions on high-technology exports to Iraq. Baker gave his assurances despite the C.I.A. warning he had received the previous month alerting him that some of the dual-use technology could potentially be used in Iraq's nuclear-weapons development program. According to the State Department's minutes of the meeting, "the Secretary admitted that the U.S. does have concerns about proliferation, but they are worldwide concerns."

The Bush Administration repeatedly

overrode internal objections to its efforts to funnel aid to Baghdad. By the fall of 1989, international bankers had cut off virtually all loans to Saddam. On October 31st, Baker called the Secretary of Agriculture, Clayton Yeutter, and pressed for a billion dollars in new agricultural-loan guarantees for Iraq despite the fact that the Agriculture Department and other agencies wanted to limit or eliminate additional funds. In November, the State Department, even though some of its officials knew that Iraq was diverting dual-use equipment to its nuclear-weapons program, declined to tighten export licenses. In January, 1990, President Bush waived congressional restrictions on Iraq's use of the Export-Import Bank, and in doing so overlooked new evidence that Iraq was testing ballistic missiles and stealing nuclear technology. In April, Saddam boasted that he had chemical weapons and would "burn half of Israel." Around that time, the Commerce Department tried to stop the flow of United States technology to Iraq, but its efforts were stymied by the White House. "The President does not want to single out Iraq," one senior White House official explained, according to classified minutes of an April 19th White House meeting. As late as May, 1990, just three months before Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the Bush Administration was still sharing intelligence information with Iraq. In July, Bush officials pushed for additional agricultural loans to Iraq, and rebuffed efforts by the Defense and Commerce Departments to restrict the export of some dual-use technology. At the end of July, Bush opposed congressional efforts to impose sanctions on Iraq. All told, the Reagan and Bush Administrations ended up providing Saddam Hussein with more than five billion dollars in loan guarantees, thereby enabling him to become a major military power in the Persian Gulf and, of course, to invade Kuwait.



"Good God! Has the dollar fallen that far?"

ON October 4th of this year, in an hour-long interview on CNN's "Larry King Live," Bush, arguing that "we were trying to work with Saddam Hussein and try[ing] to bring him along into the family of nations," denied any scandal. He added that any suggestion that the United States was building up Saddam's nuclear capability was "fallacious."

Bush's former chief of staff, Craig Fuller, went on "Nightline" last month to defend the President against the new revelations by Howard Teicher. Fuller, who is now a vice-president of Philip Morris, downplayed the significance of Bush's briefing by Amiram Nir during the 1986 Middle East trip. "I actually think that meeting wasn't terribly significant," Fuller said. "It was an effort to demonstrate that—that we could—they could get their intelligence official to sit down and talk with us, and that report—the minutes of that, as you know, go three or four pages—was all over the board in terms of what the effort really involved."

As we have seen, secret government documents contradict President Bush's statements. (The White House did not respond to written questions we posed in the preparation of this account.) And the President has not addressed evidence that the United States continued to allow the export of high-technology items to Iraq even after the Administration knew that those items would help Iraq's nuclear-weapons program, and even after Saddam's invasion of Kuwait; that the Administration tolerated Saddam's use of chemical weapons; and that on several occasions the Administration itself tried to circumvent United States arms-control laws in its efforts to aid Iraq.

And, of course, there is the evidence that Bush secretly played an important role in a covert mission designed by William Casey to maximize Iraq's military power in the first place, and to escalate the Iran-Iraq War as part of an elaborate strategy to facilitate the arms-for-hostages deal. Coming, as it did, at a point at which the two clandestine initiatives to Iran and Iraq converged, the Casey-Bush mission embodied all that is most dangerous about secret foreign policy: hidden from the American people, and almost certainly in defiance of federal laws, the covert initiatives not only led to the taking of more American hostages and to the development by Iraq of weapons of mass destruction but contributed to an escalation of the Iran-Iraq War, which cost tens of thousands of lives. Ultimately, the policies propelled the United States itself into war. ♦

WHAT HAPPENED TO AUDEN

His stunning first lines burst out of the page
Like a man thrown through a windscreen. His flat drawl
Was acrid with the spirit of the age—
The spy's last cigarette, the hungry sprawl
Of Hornby clockwork train sets in O gauge,
Huge whitewashed slogans on a factory wall—
It was as if a spotlight when he spoke
Brilliantly pierced the histrionic smoke.

Unsentimental as the secret police,
Contemporary as a Dinky Toy,
On holiday in Iceland with MacNeice,
A flop-haired Cecil Beaton golden boy,
Auden pronounced like Pericles to Greece
The short time Europe had left to enjoy,
Yet made it sound as if impending doom
Could only ventilate the drawing room.

Splendidly poised above the ashtray's rim,
The silver record-breaking aeroplane
For streamlined utterance could not match him.
Oblique but no more often than the rain,
Impenetrable only to the dim,
Neurotic merely not to be insane,
He seemed to make so much sense all at once
Anyone puzzled called himself a dunce.

Cricket-pavilion lust looked a touch twee
Even to devotees, but on the whole,
Apart from harsh reviews in *Scrutiny*,
All hailed his triumph in Cassandra's role,
Liking the *chic* he gave her, as if she
Wore ankle-strap high heels and a mink stole—
His ambiguity just further proof
Here was a man too proud to stand aloof.

By now, of course, we know he was in fact
As queer as a square grape, a roaring queen
Himself believing the forbidden act
Of love he made a meal of was obscene.
He could be crass and generally lacked tact.
He had no truck with personal hygiene.
The roughest trade would seldom stay to sleep.
In soiled sheets he was left alone to weep.

From the Kurfürstendamm to far Shanghai
He cruised in every sense with Isherwood.
Sadly he gave the talent the glad eye
And got out while the going was still good.
New York is where his genius went to die
Say those who disapproved, but though they could
Be right that he lost much of his allure,
Whether this meant decline is not so sure.

Compatriots who stuck it out have said
Guilt for his getaway left him unmanned,
Whereat his taproot shrivelled and went dead,
Having lost contact with its native land.
Some say it was the sharing of his bed
With the one man nobody else could stand
That did him in, since poets can't afford
The deadly risk of conjugal concord.
But Chester made bliss hard enough to take,
And Wystan, far from pining for his roots,
Gaily tucked into the unrationed steak.
An international figure put out shoots.
Stravinsky helped the progress of the rake:
Two cultural nabobs were in cahoots.
No, Auden aging was as much at home
On the world stage as Virgil was in Rome,

If less than *salonfähig* still. Regret
By all accounts he sparingly displayed
When kind acquaintances appeared upset,
Their guest rooms wrecked as if by an air raid.
He would forgive himself and soon forget.
Pig-like he revelled in the mess he made,
Indecorous the more his work lost force,
Devoid of shame. Devoured, though, by remorse,

For had he not gazed into the abyss
And found, as Nietzsche warned, that it gazed back?
His wizardry was puerile next to this.
No spark of glamour touched the railway track
That took whole populations to the hiss
Of cyanide and stoked the chimney stack
Scattering ash above a vast expanse
Of industry bereft of all romance.

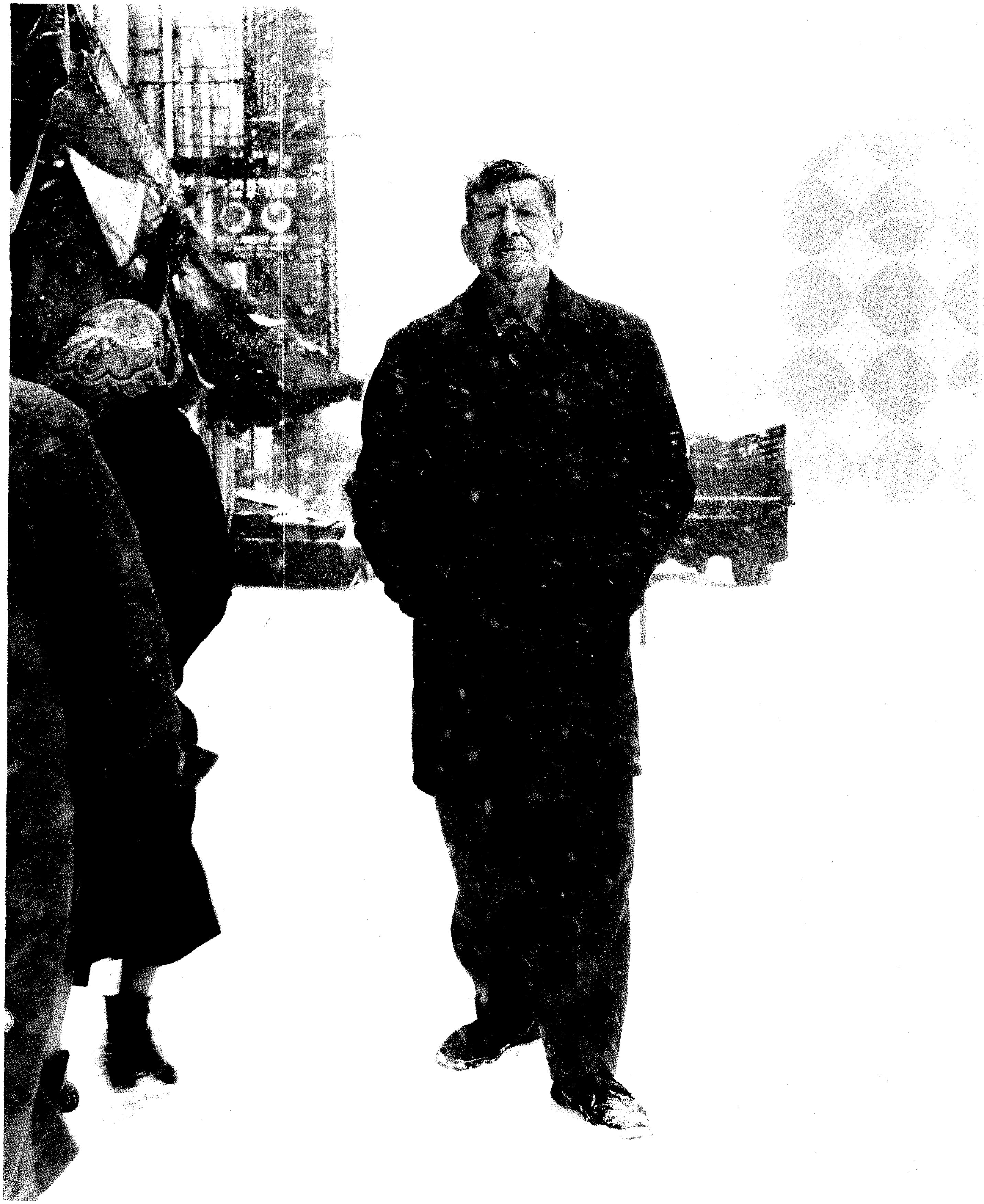
The pit cooled down but still he stood aghast
At how far he had failed to state the case
With all those tricks that now seemed so half-arsed.
The inconceivable had taken place.
Waking to find his wildest dreams outclassed
He felt his tongue must share in the disgrace,
And henceforth be confined, in recompense,
To no fine phrase devoid of plain prose sense.

The bard unstrung his lyre to change his tune,
Constrained his inspiration to repent.
Dry as the wind abrading a sand dune,
A tightly drafted letter of intent,
Each rubric grew incisive like a rune,
Merest suggestions became fully meant.
The ring of truth was in the level tone
He forged to fit hard facts and praise limestone.

His later manner leaves your neck hair flat,
Not standing up as Housman said it should
When poetry has been achieved. For that
In old age Auden simply grew too good.
A mortal fear of talking through his hat,
A moral mission to be understood
Precisely, made him extirpate the thrill
Which, being in his gift, was his to kill.

He wound up as a poor old fag at bay,
Beleaguered in the end as at the start
By dons appalled that he could talk all day
And not draw breath although pissed as a fart,
But deep down he had grown great, in a way
Seen seldom in the history of his art—
Whose earthly limits Auden helped define
By realizing he was not divine.

—Clive James



W. H. Auden, photographed by Richard Avedon on St. Mark's Place in New York City, 1960.

FICTION

BARN BURNING

by Haruki Murakami

I MET her at a friend's wedding reception here in Tokyo, and we got to know each other. Three years ago. There was nearly a dozen years' age difference between us, she being twenty and I thirty-one. Not that it mattered much. I had a lot else on my mind then, and didn't have time to worry about things like age. And she didn't care about the difference at all. I was married, too, but that didn't bother her either. For her, your age or marital status or income were like your shoe size, how high or low your voice is, the shape of your fingernails—in other words, not the kind of thing you can do anything about. Come to think of it, I guess she's right.

She was studying with that guy—I can't remember his name—the famous mime, and working as an advertising model to make ends meet. But she usually found it too much trouble to go out on the assignments her agent got her, so her income didn't amount to much. What it didn't cover, her boyfriends made up. Of course, I don't know for sure. But things she said seemed to hint at that kind of arrangement.

I'm not saying that she slept with men for money. Maybe there were times when something close to that took place. But that's not the point. Something else was at work in her relations with men. There was a simplicity about her that attracted a certain type of man. He would look at that unabashed simplicity and want to put it together with his own complicated, bottled-up feelings. I can't explain it well, but I think that's what was going on. You could say that she lived on her simplicity.

Naturally, you couldn't expect things to work that way all the time. That would turn the whole structure of the universe upside down. It could only happen under certain conditions, in a certain time and place. The way it did with the Tangerine Peeling. Let me tell you about this Tangerine Peeling. As I mentioned, when I first met her she told me she was studying mime. "Is that so?" I said. Didn't surprise me too much. Young women these days are all studying something or other. But she didn't seem the type who'd be serious about perfecting a skill.

Then she showed me the Tangerine Peeling. As the name says, it involves peeling a tangerine. On her left was a bowl piled high with tangerines; on her right, a bowl for the peels. At least that was the idea—actually there wasn't anything there at all. She'd take an imaginary tangerine in her hand, slowly peel it, put one section in her mouth, and spit out the seeds. When she'd finished one tangerine, she'd wrap up all the seeds in the peel and deposit it in the bowl to her right. She repeated these movements over and over again. When you try to put it in words it doesn't sound like anything special. But if you see it with your own eyes for ten or twenty minutes (we were just chatting at the bar, and, almost without thinking, she kept on performing it) gradually the sense of reality is sucked right out of everything around you. It's a very strange feeling. A long time ago, when Adolf Eichmann was on trial in an Israeli court, someone said that a fitting punishment for him would be locking him in an airtight room and slowly pumping all the air out. I don't know how he actually died. . . . The story just sort of popped into my head.

"You're pretty talented," I told her.

"This? It's easy. Has nothing to do with talent. What you do isn't make yourself believe that there are tangerines there. You forget that the tangerines are *not* there. That's all."

"Sounds like Zen."

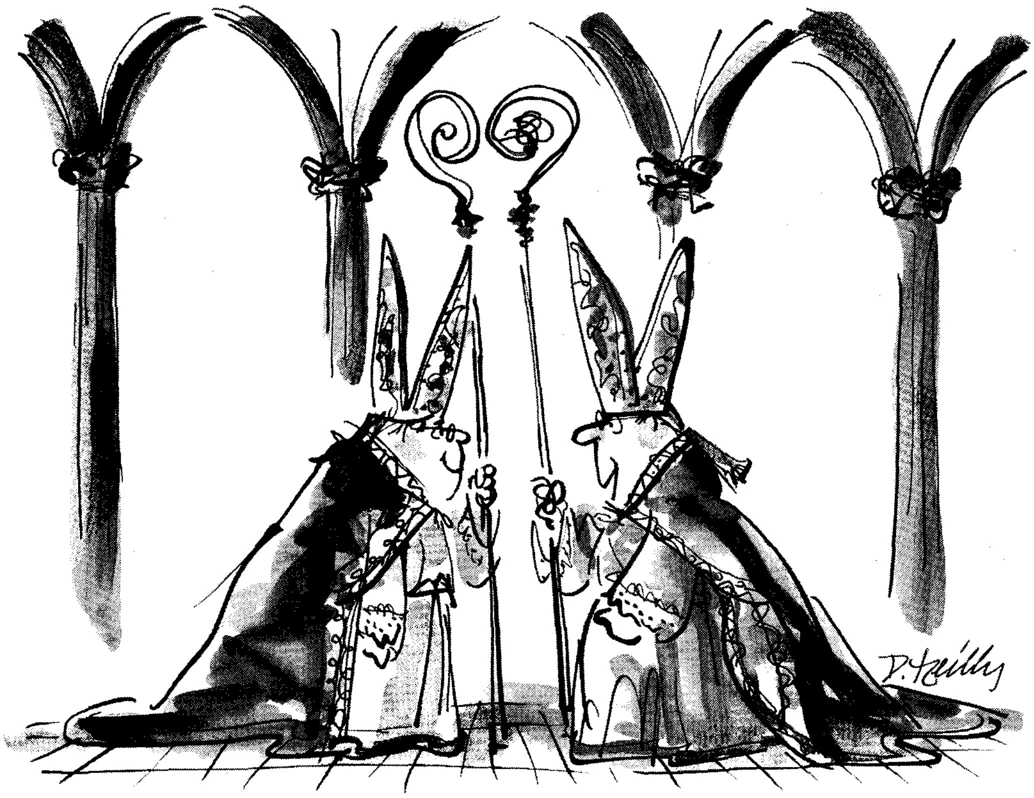
I could see we were going to get along.

WE didn't go out all that often. About once a month, twice at most. I'd call her up and ask her where she'd like to go. We'd have something to eat, have a few drinks in a bar. And talk up a storm. I'd listen to her talk, she'd listen to me. We had hardly anything in common to talk about, but that didn't matter. I guess you'd say we were friends. Naturally, I paid for everything, all the food and drink. A few times she called me up, usually when she'd run out of money and was hungry. On those occasions she ate like you wouldn't believe.

I was completely relaxed when I was with her. I could erase everything from my mind—all the work I didn't want to do, the jumble of senseless ideas people carry around in their heads. She had that effect on me. She didn't talk about anything in particular. Often I would just keep nodding my head, not really picking up the gist of her words. But listening to her made me feel relaxed, as if I were gazing at drifting clouds far off in the distance.

I talked about all sorts of things, too. I told her, as honestly as I could, my thoughts on everything, from personal dilemmas to the state of the world. You name it. Maybe she was doing the same thing I did—just nodding her head as she listened to me, without any of it sinking in. But I didn't care. What I was looking for was a certain *feeling*. A feeling that had nothing to do with sympathy—or understanding.

In the spring of the year after we met, her father had died of heart disease, and she inherited a little money from him. At least that's what she told me. She said she wanted to use the money to go to North Africa. I don't know why she picked North Africa, but I went ahead and introduced her to a girl I knew who worked at the Algerian Embassy in Tokyo. So off she went to Algeria. As things turned out, I went to see her off at the airport. She carried just one beat-up old bag with a few changes of clothes stuffed inside. Going through the luggage check, she looked more like she was going *home* to North Africa than taking a trip there.



"Long processions have been a snap since you put me on to these air-pump sneakers!"

• •

"Are you going to come back to Japan?" I asked her, jokingly.

"Of course I am," she replied.

Three months later she was back, seven pounds lighter and tanned a deep brown. And with a new boyfriend. It seemed the two of them met at a restaurant in Algiers. Since there weren't many Japanese there, they grew close and soon became lovers. As far as I knew, he was the first steady boyfriend she'd ever had.

He was in his late twenties, tall, impeccably dressed, and well-spoken. His face was somewhat expressionless, but he was handsome enough, and came across as a pleasant sort of guy. His hands were large, with long fingers.

I knew that much about him because I went to pick her up at the airport. A telegram had come all of a sudden from Beirut with just the date and flight number. When the plane arrived (four hours late, because of bad weather—I sat in the airport coffee shop and read through three magazines) the two of them appeared at the gate arm in arm, for all the world like some nice young married couple. She introduced me to him, and we shook hands. He had the firm handshake of a person who'd lived abroad a long time. She said she was dying for a bowl of tempura and rice, so we went to a restaurant, and she had some while he and I had a couple of draught beers.

"I'm in the import-export business," he told me. But he didn't say anything more about it. Maybe he didn't want to talk about his job, or maybe he thought I'd find it boring, I really don't know. I didn't have much interest in hearing about trade, so I didn't ask any questions. Having nothing much to talk about, we talked about how dangerous Beirut had become, and about the water system in Tunis. He seemed to be up on everything from North Africa to the Middle East.

When she'd finished her tempura, she gave a deep yawn and said she was sleepy. She looked like she was going to conk out right on the spot; she had the habit of nodding off at the most unexpected times. He said he'd take her home by cab. I told them the train would be faster for me. I had no idea why I'd gone to all the trouble of coming out to the airport.

"I'm glad I could get to know you," he said, somewhat apologetically.

"Same here," I replied.

I saw him again several times after that. Whenever I ran into her, there he'd be, right beside her. And if I had a date with her he'd drive her to wherever we were supposed to meet. He drove a silver sports car, German. I know next to nothing about cars, so I can't really describe it well, but it looked like it belonged in a black-and-white Fellini film.

"He must be pretty well off, don't you think?" I asked her once.

"Yeah," she answered without much interest. "Guess so."

"I wonder if you can make that much in foreign trade."

"Foreign trade?"

"That's what he told me. Said he was in foreign trade."

"Well, I guess he must be. But I don't know. He doesn't seem to be working anywhere. He meets a lot of people and makes a lot of phone calls, but he doesn't seem to be too wrapped up in it."

Just like Gatsby, I thought. A young man who's a riddle: you have no idea what he does, really, but he never seems to be hurting for money.

SHE called me one Sunday afternoon in October. My wife had left in the morning to visit relatives and I was alone. It was a beautiful, clear Sunday, and I was gazing at the camphor tree in the garden, eating an apple. I must have eaten seven apples that day. This happens from time to time—I get a pathological craving for apples.

"We were just in the neighborhood and wondered if we could drop by to see you," she said.

"We?" I asked.

"Him and me," she said.

"Sure, come on," I said.

"O.K.—we'll be over in half an hour," she said. And hung up.

I lay vacantly on the couch for a while, then got up and showered and shaved. Drying off, I cleaned my ears. I couldn't decide whether I should straighten up the house, and in the end decided not to. There wasn't enough time to do a thorough job of it, and if it can't be done right, I thought, better not

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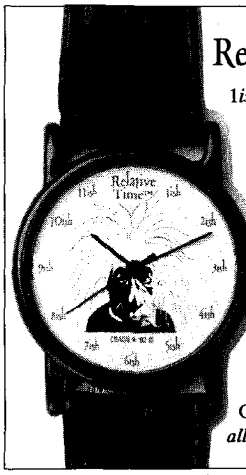

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bother with it at all. The room was littered with books, magazines, letters, records, pencils, and sweaters, but it didn't look that messy. I'd just finished a job and was feeling lazy. I sat down on the sofa and, gazing at the camphor tree, had myself another apple.

A little after two, I heard a car pull up to the house. When I opened the door, I saw the silver sports car at the curb. She stuck her face out the window and waved. I showed them where to park, out in back.

"Well, here we are!" she said with a smile. She wore a light shirt that showed the outline of her nipples through it, and an olive-green miniskirt.

He had on a navy-blue blazer. Somehow he seemed different, probably because of his two-day growth of beard. You'd think the whiskers would make him look scruffy; instead they gave him a certain presence. Getting out of the car, he took off his sunglasses and stuck them in his pocket.

"I'm really sorry to drop in like this all of a sudden on your day off," he said.

"No problem," I said. "It's like every day's a day off for me. And I was just ready for some company."

"We brought a meal," she said, and she hauled a large white paper sack from the rear seat of the car.

"A meal?"

"Nothing special. We just thought that since we dropped in on you on a Sunday we'd better bring something to eat," he said.

"Great. All I've had today is apples."

We went inside and laid the food out on the table. Quite a spread: roast-beef sandwiches, salad, smoked salmon, and blueberry ice cream—and plenty of everything. While she arranged it all on plates, I got some white wine out of the refrigerator and uncorked it. It looked like we were having ourselves a little party.

"Let's eat. I'm starved," she said, famished as usual.

We munched our sandwiches, ate our salad, and helped ourselves to the smoked salmon. When we'd polished off the wine, we drank some canned beer from the fridge. One thing you can always count on at my place is a fridge full of beer.

His color didn't change at all, no matter how much he drank. I am a pretty good beer drinker myself. She had a couple of cans with us, and in less than an hour the table was lined with empties. She selected a couple of records from the shelf and set them on the player. The first tune was Miles Davis doing "Airegin."

"You don't see too many of these automatic changers these days," he said.

I explained how I was a fan of automatic changers, and how I'd had a tough time coming up with a Garrard in good shape. Nodding from time to time, he listened politely.

We talked about audio equipment for a while, and he fell quiet. Then he said, "I've got some grass, if you'd care for a smoke."

I wasn't sure how to react. I'd just given up smoking cigarettes a month before; it was touch and go whether I could shake the habit for good, and I had no idea what effect smoking marijuana would have on me. But I decided to give it a try. He took out the dark-colored leaves in a foil wrapper from the bottom of the paper sack, rolled the grass into a sheet of cigarette paper, and licked the glued edge. He lit up with his lighter and took a few drags to make sure the joint was going before passing it over to me. The grass was terrific. We sat there silently for a while, each taking a toke and then handing it along. Miles Davis was over, and a collection of Strauss waltzes began to play. Not your usual programming, I thought. But not bad.

After we finished the first joint, she said she was sleepy. She hadn't gotten enough rest the night before, apparently, and the three beers and the grass knocked her out. I showed her upstairs and put her to bed. She asked to borrow a T-shirt. I gave her one, she stripped down to her panties, pulled on the shirt, and lay down on the bed. "Are you cold?" I asked, but she was already snoring away. Shaking my head, I went back downstairs.

In the living room her boyfriend was rolling a second joint. He was something. Given a choice, I'd rather have snuggled up next to her in bed and taken a good nap, but that was out. I smoked the second joint with him, the Strauss waltzes still going. For some reason I remembered a play we'd done back in grade school. I was the owner of a glove shop. A baby fox comes in looking for gloves, but he doesn't have enough money to buy them.

"You can't buy gloves with that," I say. The villain.

"But Mama is so cold. Her paws are all chapped. *Please!*" the baby fox begs.

"Sorry, but it's not enough. Save up your money and come back later. If you do—"

"—sometimes I burn down barns," he said.

"Excuse me?" I said. I was drifting off, and I must have heard him wrong.

"Sometimes I burn down barns," he said again.

I looked at him. He was tracing the design on his lighter with the tip of his fingernail. He sucked the marijuana smoke deep into his lungs, held it there for ten seconds, then slowly let it out. The smoke swirled up like ectoplasm from his mouth. He passed me the joint.

"Pretty good stuff," I said.

He nodded. "I brought it back from India. The best they had. You smoke this and all kinds of memories rush out at you. Light, smells, things like that. The quality of your memory"—he paused in a leisurely way, and, as if searching for the right words, lightly snapped his fingers a couple of times—"is like something you've never experienced before. Don't you think so?"

I do, I told him. I was lost in memories of the commotion on the grade-school stage, of the smell of paint on the cardboard scenery.

"I'd like to hear about the barns," I said.

He gazed at me. His face, as usual, was expressionless.

"You don't mind me telling you about it?" he asked.

"Go right ahead," I replied.

"It's very simple, really. You pour gasoline around, throw on a lighted match and *whoosh!* it's all over. Takes less than fifteen minutes to burn to the ground. Of course, I'm not talking about large barns. More like sheds, really."

"So . . ." I said, and I stopped. I couldn't figure out how to go on. "So why do you burn down barns?"

"Is it strange?"

"I'm not sure. You burn barns, and I don't. Obviously there's a difference between the two. Rather than say which is

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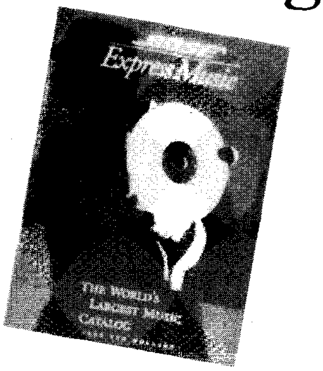

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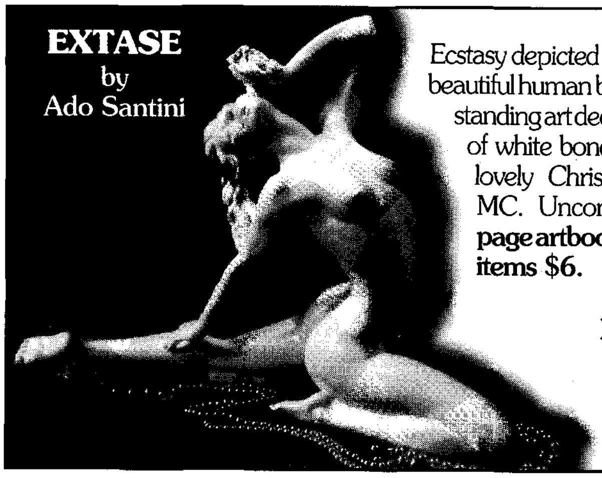

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strange and which isn't, what I'd like to pin down is *how* they're different. But you're the one who brought up this barn burning in the first place, right?"

"Yes," he said. "Right you are. Oh, by the way—do you have any Ravi Shankar records?"

"I don't," I told him.

He sat there blankly for a time. His mind seemed all twisted around, like putty. Or maybe it was *my* mind that was all twisted around.

"I burn roughly one barn every two months," he said. And snapped his fingers again. "That seems about the right pace. For me, that is."

I nodded vaguely. *The right pace*?

"So, are these your own barns you burn?" I asked.

He looked at me as if he had no idea what I was talking about. "Why would I burn down my own barns? What makes you think I own so many barns?"

"So, what you're telling me," I said, "is you burn other people's barns, correct?"

"That's right," he said. "Of course that's right. Other people's barns. So it's illegal. Just like you and me sitting here smoking grass—definitely against the law."

I was silent, resting my elbows on the arms of the chair.

"I burn other people's barns without their permission. Of course, I always choose one that won't turn into a four-alarm blaze. I don't want to start a fire—just burn down barns."

I nodded, and snuffed out the stub of the joint. "But if you're caught you'll be in trouble. It's arson, after all. You blow it and you could wind up in jail."

"I won't get caught," he said casually. "I pour on the gasoline, strike a match, and take off. Then I have a good time watching it all from a distance with binoculars. I won't get caught. The police aren't going to comb the streets over a lousy little barn burning down."

"Granddad was the very first person ever to say 'Oh, wow!'"

He was probably right, I thought. And no one would ever think that a well-dressed young man driving an expensive foreign car would be running around torching barns.

"Does she know about it?" I asked, pointing upstairs.

"She doesn't know a thing. Actually, I've never told another soul. It's not the kind of topic you can bring up with just anybody."

"Then why me?"

He spread the fingers of his left hand straight out and rubbed his cheek. The whiskers made a scratchy, dry sound, like a bug crawling over a taut sheet of paper. "You're a writer, so I thought you must be interested in patterns of human behavior. Writers are supposed to appreciate something for what it is, before they hand down a judgment or whatever. If 'appreciate' isn't the right word, maybe you can say they can accept things for what they are. That's why I told you. Besides, I wanted to talk about it with someone."

I nodded. But in what way was I supposed to accept this as it was? Frankly, I had no idea.

He laughed. "The way I'm explaining it might be a little weird, I guess." He spread both hands in front of him and clapped them together. "The world's full of barns, that are, like, waiting for me to burn them down. A barn all by itself beside the ocean, a barn in the middle of a rice paddy . . . Anyhow, all kinds of barns. Give me fifteen minutes, and I'll burn them clear to the ground. So it looks like there was never any barn there to begin with. No one gets choked up over it. It just . . . disappears. *Whoosh!*"

"But you're the one who judges that they're expendable, right?"

"I don't judge anything. The barns are waiting to be burned. I just accept that. I merely accept what's there. It's like the rain. The rain falls. The river swells up. Something gets carried away in the flow. Is the rain making a judgment? It's not like I'm out to commit an immoral act. I have my own code of morality. A sense of morality is important; people can't live without it. I think of it like this: morality is the delicate balance that's involved in parallel existence."

"Parallel existence? What do you mean?"

"In other words, I'm right here, but I'm over *there*, too. I'm in Tokyo, and at the same time I'm in Tunis. I can blame people and forgive them, all at once. There's a *balance* involved, and without it I don't think we'd be able to live. It's like a clasp—if it came undone we'd fall to pieces. But because it's there we can experience this kind of parallel existence."

"And burning down barns is consistent with your code of morality?"

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"Not exactly. It's more an act that sustains that morality. But enough of this morality talk. That's not the point I'm getting at. What I'm trying to say is that the world is filled with these barns. You've got your barns, I've got mine. Trust me, I know what I'm talking about. I've been almost everywhere in the world, done everything you could possibly imagine. Even stared death in the face a couple of times. Don't get me wrong, I'm not trying to brag or anything. But why don't we change the subject? I'm usually not this talkative—the grass makes me run off at the mouth."

We sat there, silent and still for a while, waiting, it seemed, for the glow to wear off. I had no clue what I should say next. I felt as if I were looking through a train window watching a weird landscape flash in and out of view. My body was relaxed, yet I couldn't grasp the details of the scenes passing by. But I could grasp, quite distinctly, the presence of my own body. And with it a trace of parallel existence: here's me, over here thinking. And here's another me, *watching* the first me thinking. Time ticked by in polyrhythmic precision.

"Care for another beer?" I asked after a while.

"Thanks. Don't mind if I do."

I brought out four cans from the kitchen, along with some Camembert cheese. We had two beers each and ate the cheese.

"When was the last time you burned down a barn?" I asked him.

"Let me see." He lightly gripped his empty beer can and thought for a while. "This summer, the end of August."

"And when are you going to burn down your next one?"

"I don't know. I'm not going by some schedule, circling dates on the calendar and holding off till then. I burn a barn when I get the urge to."

"But when you want to burn one, there isn't always the kind you're looking for just waiting for you, is there?"

"Of course not," he said quietly. "So I make sure I've got a good one picked out in advance."

"You lay in a supply, in other words."

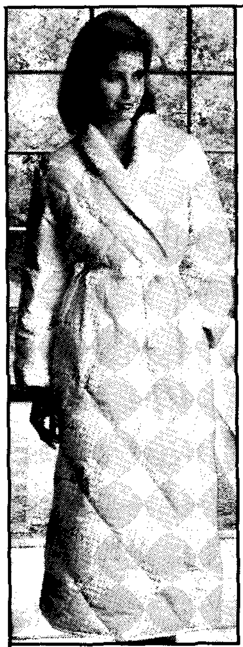
"That's right."

"Can I ask you one more thing?"

"Sure."

"Have you already decided on your next barn?"

Frown lines formed between his



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eyes. And he breathed in a rush of air through his nose. "Yes. I've already found it."

I didn't say anything, just sipped at what was left of my beer.

"It's a wonderful barn. It's a long time since I've seen one so well worth burning. Actually, I came over here today to check it out."

"You mean it's around here?"

"Very close by," he said.

So ended our discussion of barns.

He woke up his girlfriend at five, and apologized again for having dropped in on me out of the blue. Even though he'd drunk a huge amount of beer, he was cold sober. He drove the car out from behind the house. It had one small nick, near the headlight.

"I'll keep an eye out for those barns," I said in farewell.

"Right," he said. "Anyhow, remember it's right nearby."

"What do you mean, 'barns'?" she asked.

"Just something between us men," he replied.

"I see," she said.

And they disappeared.

I returned to the living room and plopped down on the sofa. The tabletop was covered with all kinds of garbage. I picked up my duffel coat from where it lay on the floor, covered myself with it, and fell sound asleep.

When I woke up, the room was pitch-dark. Seven o'clock.

A bluish pall and the pungent smell of the marijuana lay over the room. The darkness was strangely uneven. Still sacked out on the sofa, I tried to conjure up more memories of the school play, but I couldn't get a clear picture in my head. Did the baby fox ever get the gloves?

I got up from the sofa, opened the windows for some fresh air, made coffee in the kitchen, and drank it.

THE next day, I went to the bookstore and bought a map of the part of town where I live. One of those black-and-white maps on a scale of one to twenty thousand, showing even the smallest lanes and alleys. Map in hand, I walked the neighborhood, marking with a pencil the location of every barn. Over three days, I explored an area some two and a half miles in each direction. My home was on the outskirts of town, with quite a few farms still around, so there were lots of barns. I counted sixteen.

The barn he planned to burn must be one of those. The way he'd said that it was right nearby made me sure it wasn't beyond the area I'd covered.

Next, I made a careful check of each of the sixteen barns. First, I eliminated the ones too close to people's houses or to those plastic-covered greenhouses farmers use. Next, I crossed off the ones that had farm tools and pesticides inside—that is, ones that looked as though someone was using them every day. I was sure he wouldn't want to burn one of those.

That left five barns. Five barns that could be burned. The kind that could burn down in fifteen minutes, and would burn clear to the ground—and wouldn't be any loss. But I couldn't decide which of the five he'd pick. It was a question of personal preference. I was dying to find out which one it would be.

I spread out the map and erased all but five of the "X"s I'd made. Then I got out my T-square, French curve, and divider, and I mapped out the shortest route that would pass all five barns and take me back home. The route curved along the river and over some hills, so the project took longer than I thought it would. The course ended up being four and one-third miles, no matter how many times I measured it.

At six the next morning I put on my jogging outfit and running shoes and ran the length of the course I'd mapped out. Since I usually do three and a half miles every morning, adding an extra mile didn't bother me too much. The scenery wasn't bad, and though there were two railroad crossings along the way, they didn't really slow me down.

The course circled the athletic grounds of the college near my house, then ran along the river and nearly two miles up a deserted dirt road. The first barn was halfway up the road. Then the course cut through a wood and up a slight slope. Another barn. A little way off, there was a stable for a racetrack. The horses might kick up a little ruckus if they saw a fire, but that's all; they wouldn't get hurt or anything.

The third and fourth barns looked alike, like two ugly old twins. They were only two hundred or so yards apart. Both of them were dilapidated and filthy. If you were going to burn down one of them, you might as well burn the pair.

The last barn stood beside a railroad crossing, at about the three-and-a-half-mile mark. It was clearly abandoned. It faced the road and had a tin Pepsi-Cola sign nailed to it. The building itself—I'm not sure you could even call it a building anymore—had mostly collapsed. It fit his description—a building just waiting for someone to commit it to the flames.

I stopped in front of the last barn, took a few deep breaths, then crossed the railroad tracks and headed home. The run took thirty-one minutes and thirty seconds. I took a shower and had breakfast. Then I lay on the sofa, listening to a record and, when that was finished, started work.

I ran the same course every morning for a month. But none of the barns burned down.

Sometimes the thought hit me that maybe he was trying to get *me* to burn down a barn. As if he'd filled my head with the image of a barn burning and were steadily pumping it up more and more, like putting air in a bicycle tire. There were even times when I thought that, as long as I was waiting for him to do it, I might as well go ahead and strike a match and burn one down. It's just a beat-up old barn, right?

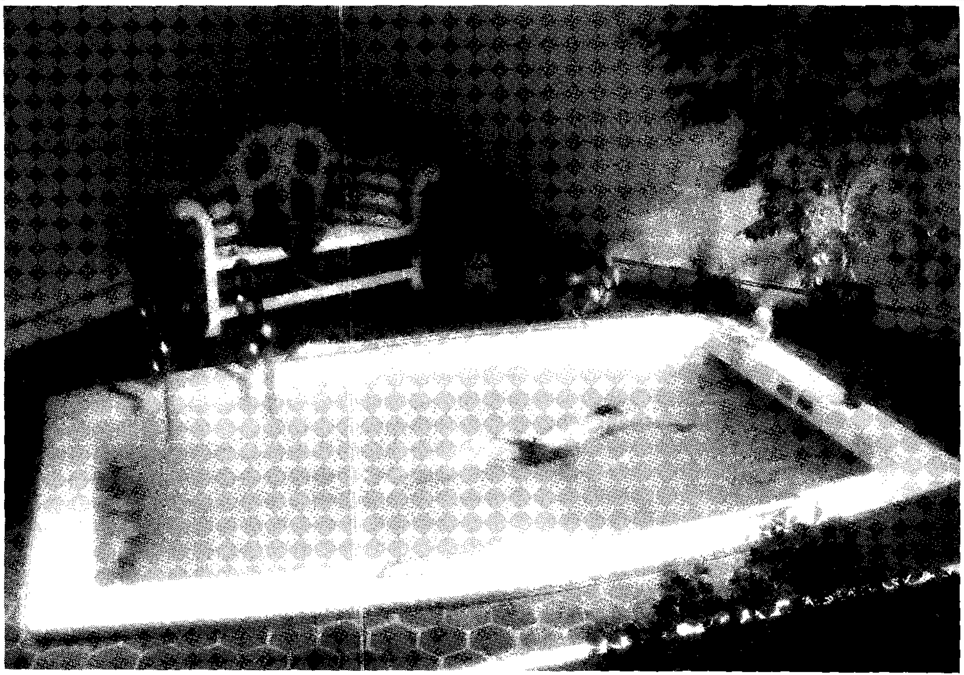
But that's going too far. After all, it's not me who burns barns, it's *him*. No matter how much the image of burning barns might swell up in my head, I'm just not the barn-burning type.

Maybe he decided on some other barn somewhere. Or was too busy to find the time to burn one. I didn't hear from her at all.

December came, and with it the end of fall, and the morning air turned piercingly cold. No change in the barns, just white frost covering their roofs. In frozen woods, winter birds noisily flapped their wings. The world moved on as always.

THE next time I saw him was that December, a few days before Christmas. Wherever you went, Christmas carols were playing. I was busy walking around town buying presents for all sorts of people. Over near Nogizaki, I spotted his car in the parking lot of a coffee shop. There was no mistaking that silver sports car, with its Shinagawa plates and the small scratch next to the left headlight. The car didn't look as bright and shiny as it used to. The silver seemed faded, but that may have just been my imagination. I have a tendency to rework my memories to suit me. Without thinking, I went inside.

The interior of the shop was dark, with a strong aroma of coffee. People's voices were muted, and baroque music played softly in the background. I spotted him right away. Seated by the window, he was drinking café au lait. The



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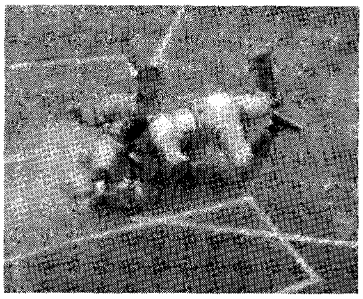

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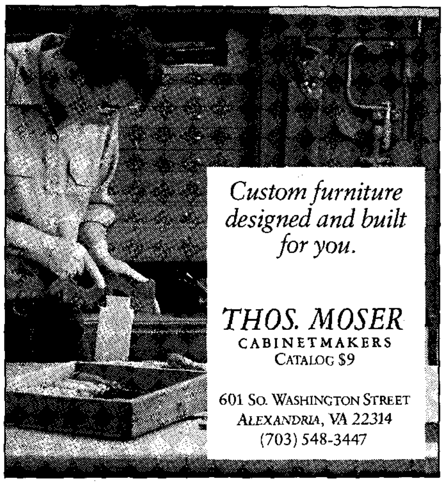

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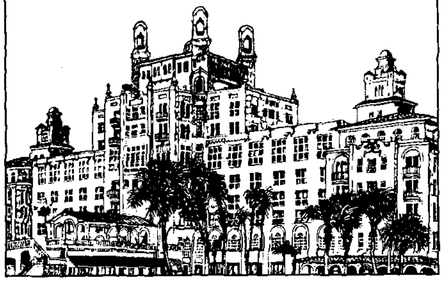

shop was hot enough to fog up your glasses, but he hadn't removed his cashmere coat. Or his muffler.

I was a little flustered, but I just said hello. I didn't tell him I'd seen his car parked out front; I happened to come into the shop and happened to run into him.

"Mind if I sit down?" I asked.

"Not at all. Please go ahead," he said.

We chatted for a while. But our conversation went nowhere. We didn't have much to say to each other, and his thoughts seemed to be elsewhere. Even so, he didn't appear to mind my sharing his table. He told me about the harbor in Tunisia. And about the shrimp they catch there. It wasn't that he felt obliged to talk; he just wanted to tell me about the shrimp. But the story ran out halfway through, like a trickle of water being sucked up by sand.

He raised his hand, called a waiter over, and ordered a second cup of café au lait.

"By the way, whatever happened to that barn?" I ventured to ask him.

A trace of a smile played at the corners of his mouth. "Ah—you still remember, I see," he said. He took his handkerchief out of his pocket, wiped his mouth, and put the handkerchief back in his pocket. "I burned it, of course. Burned it right down. Just like I said I would."

"Near my house?"

"Yes. Right nearby."

"When?"

"A while back, ten days after we dropped by your house."

I told him about marking the locations of the barns on a map and running past them once a day. "So I couldn't have missed it," I said.

"You're quite meticulous, aren't you?" he said brightly. "Meticulous and logical. But you must have overlooked it. That happens sometimes. A thing's too close and you miss it."

"Well, I don't get it."

He straightened his tie and glanced at his watch. "It's too close," he said. "But I have to be going. Why don't we have a nice long talk about it next time? You'll have to excuse me, but someone's waiting for me."

There was no reason to keep him any longer. He stood up and put his cigarettes and lighter in his pocket.

"Oh, by the way, have you seen her since that day?" he asked.

"No, I haven't. Have you?"

"No. I can't get hold of her. She isn't in her apartment, I can't get through by phone, and she hasn't been going to her mime class for a long time."

"I imagine she just took off for somewhere. She's done that a number of times."

He stood there, hands stuck in his pockets, and stared at the tabletop. "With no money, for a month and a half? She's not the kind who can make it on her own, you know."

He snapped his fingers inside his pocket a couple of times.

"She doesn't have a cent," he continued. "Or any real friends, either. Her address book is crammed, but those are just names. There's not a single person she can depend on. You're the only one she trusted. I'm not saying that to be polite. You were someone special to her. Even made me a bit jealous. And I'm not the kind of person who's ever jealous." He gave a slight sigh and looked at his watch again. "I've really got to be going. Let's get together again sometime."

I nodded. But the right words wouldn't come out. It was always that way. Whenever I was with him the words just wouldn't flow.

I TRIED calling her a couple of times after that, until the phone company shut off her phone. I was a little worried, so I went to her apartment. Her door was locked. A sheaf of junk mail was stuffed in her mailbox. I couldn't locate the building supervisor, so I couldn't even find out if she still lived there. I tore a page from my appointment book, wrote a note saying, "Get in touch with me," signed my name, and dropped it in her mailbox.

Not a word.

The next time I visited her apartment, there was someone else's nameplate on the door. I knocked, but no one answered. Just like the last time, the super was nowhere to be found.

So I gave up. That was almost a year ago. She just disappeared.

I still run past the five barns every morning. No barn in my neighborhood has burned down. And I haven't heard about any barn burning. December's come again, and the winter birds fly overhead. And I keep on getting older. ♦

(*Translated, from the Japanese, by Philip Gabriel.*)

A MONUMENT IN UTOPIA

(Osip Mandelstam)

Five thousand miles east of *childless Petrograd*,
You! You, with your hair-raising tales,
Your coat without buttons, your raging fits,
Your history of poverty, your torn cigarettes!
You, with your heart still set
On impossible things,
Touching the top of your head absently
Like Pharaoh's baker trying to explain
His dream that there were birds
Devouring cakes from a basket on his head—
Then falling silent to feast upon a grain of sugar
That audibly melted on your tongue,
A crumb you lifted to your lips
With a delicate finger-and-thumb
In a trance of concentration,
The first grain from that half kilo of sugar,
Like a sack of diamonds finely ground,
For which you traded a shredded
Yellow leather overcoat in December,
Though God knows where you'd acquired
Such a coat,

Though granted that, in the old stories,
Garments are lavished on paupers,
Granted that, in one's childhood books,
The coat of the King
Always comes to rest around
The stooped shoulders of his poorest subject,
Albeit no longer lined with a flash of silk,
No longer even held together
With the precious stitches of silk thread

Inside the coat of Akaky Akakyevich,
Who, though he squandered all that he had
For his lofty dream of a new overcoat,
Though for months he went hungry at night,
Though he did without tea and candles,
Still had to skimp on the calico lining
And a collar of cat's fur.

Even at the Expulsion, God made
With His own hands garments of fur and skin
For the expelled—

But for you the sum of your inheritance,
Of which you were robbed anyway,
Was a veil of threads handed down
Through the generations, a veil descended
From that succession of stolen overcoats
Stuffed with paper shreds
From the nineteenth century.

Out there a giant scissors pursues
Little men, insignificant men, non-persons,
Up and down the lanes of Vtoraya Rechka,
Clacking and clacking behind them,
Cutting their overcoats into streamers,
Until all that is left is a bit to drape
Over the shoulders, but not enough
To cover the face with, when the time comes.

And who wouldn't want to press
His coat on you?
Who wouldn't exchange
Your bunk for his comfortable bed?

Who, then, that has lived such a life
Has escaped the Emperor's notice?
For each and every one of them
Was denounced.
What land and sea did he not thoroughly search,
What clefts in the rocks,
What secret holes in the earth,
That he might bring to the light of day
One who was hidden there? And once he had found
Such a one he would carry him away,
And not to his palace, either.

You will be free to wander
In the metropolitan library,
Free to stare,
Without arousing suspicion,
At the statue voted by the senate
To honor Poetry,
Once a block of undifferentiated marble
Originally destined, in the old life,
For a grandiloquent hotel lobby
In the Empire style, hinting at transports
Of stone in wobbling wheelbarrows driven
Along filthy lanes by men whose fingernails
Are suitable for decapitating fleas
And scratching their beards as if
They sandpapered a shadow—
Once a block of marble,
Yet now a spirit glinting in the room,
With a starry hoard of words
Like tiny prisms on its lips.

Although the rhapsodes themselves
Will be banished from the reading rooms
To the public park, exiles
Even from the reconstructed life,
Framed in the library's windows,
They will reappear in bronze

Along the radiating paths,
Among the avenues of limes, for miles.
They will populate the gravel walks
In greatcoats, holding hats and books,
Although with interchangeable heads
In deference to changing tastes and styles.
Among the reveries of oval ponds
Like looking glasses with drifting swans,
None will be represented pushing a wheelbarrow,
No man, with his head between his knees,
Will be seated and puking between his feet,
No scarecrow with his hands
Fastened beneath his armpits,
Looking cautiously over his shoulder
From his gravel mound,
Will thus indicate the wind-chill factor
On the "date of death unknown."

Seated in the shade of your monument,
Where you will wear an absurd morning coat
Far above your station in life,
Schoolboys will read your lines:
Now I'm dead in the grave with my lips moving
And every schoolboy repeating the words by heart.
Although you are laid nowhere in a grave,
Although you speak without moving your lips,
Although your words shine by themselves.

Beyond the statues of Important Persons
Posthumously rehabilitated
Retired prison guards will be seated in the shade
In flocks along the banks of a green river,
As if a goosegirl had driven
Them to the edge of the pond.
Seated on stone benches,
They will be excused and pensioned off.
In their eighties now, they will snooze
And nurse their tea, and their frail shoulders
Will shake when they cough.
At night, for them, there will be
A tincture of valerian and a teaspoon
Glimmering on the bedside table.

Even that one will have attained
A gentle expression,
Who stirred the gravel with a stick
And asked, *So now where is your poetry?*
Even his shadow will tower over nothing more
Than a board of dominoes,
His double chin propped on his fist,
His elbow crushing wadded headlines.

He will die in his own bed
Like an old woman, his head dropping down
Between his glass of tea and a needlepoint cushion
Where a tattered finch flutters,
Though it is stabbed to the heart,
Across a shallow autumnal stream,
Plush with once bright-red thread
Gone muddy brown;

For him, death will lie
Open like a newspaper in a dream,
A paper he ransacks his apartment for,
And when he lays his hands on it at last,
As he smooths the crinkled page to read,
He will simply spread before his face
Not a page but, oddly, a black comet,
Or rather a rococo ornament in empty space
Hanging intriguingly before his eyes,

And he will turn his face toward an evening
So thick with butterflies
Along a blurry road
That the convoy truck in which he is transported
Will lay two black tire stripes
Through the white, rustling millions...

It will have evaporated,
That whiff of the scaffold, the siege tower,
Of vaults sealed so long that no one
Would wish to break them,
That sense that a bone is being broken
Somewhere in the world,
That one's number is called out.

Even the dictator, the son of a devout
Washerwoman and a cobbler who savagely beat him,
Will be seated in the library among
Unsuspecting readers,
Including you, where you will be hidden
Behind your book, thumbing the last page
Of your life, still afraid to read it;

Even the dictator will leave off
Doodling wolves in red ink,
And will begin, tentatively, to explore
The vaults of white paper
With a sharpened pencil,
Where howls still will be trapped
In the gray zone of lead.
Even he will turn a sequence of the intricate
Misfortunes of other people
Into icy, twinkling, jagged metres
Until the page will be as blackened
As those black wells
Into which you were lowered
In a nightmare of the skull-piled woods
Outside of Novgorod.

— GJERTRUD SCHNACKENBERG

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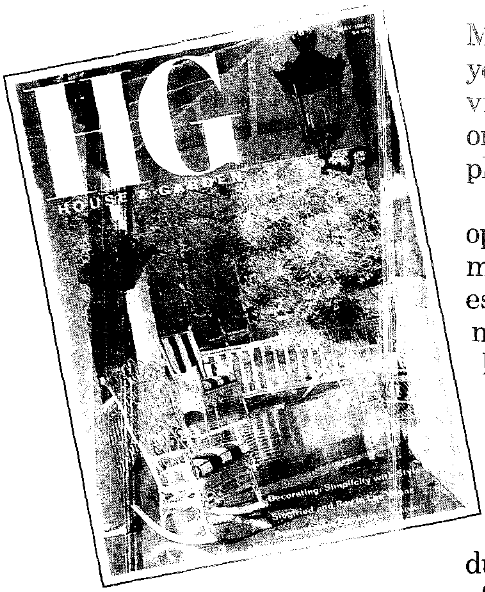

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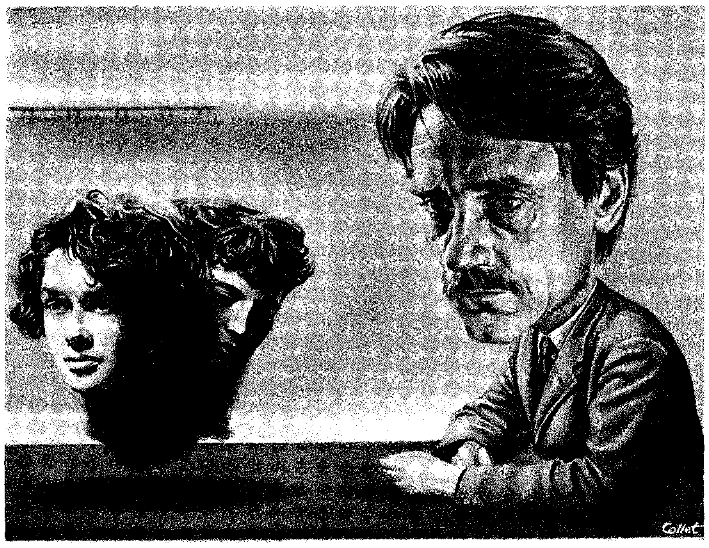
THE CRITICS

THE CURRENT CINEMA

MARRIAGES FROM HELL

by Terrence Rafferty

THE heroine of Stacy Cochran's "My New Gun" is a young suburban housewife named Debbie Bender (Diane Lane), whose husband buys her a revolver she doesn't want. Sunning himself on the balcony of their townhouse-style New Jersey condo unit, Dr. Gerald Bender (Stephen Collins) announces to his wife that he's uneasy living in such a "totally unprotected" spot. Debbie, in long shot, takes a slow look around her, as if to gauge the danger of her home's exposed location. The movie doesn't cut to what the heroine sees as she's gazing into the distance, because the previous shot has already shown us the view from the Benders' deck: a golf course. Most filmmakers would construct the sequence differently—would save the golf-course shot for a cutaway *after* Gerald's pompous speech about the "very sick world" we all live in. Picture it: he pontificates; she surveys; cut to her point of view, a pastoral vista of strolling golfers; big laugh. Cochran's way is better: the joke doesn't go off right in our faces, like an exploding cigar, but seems to come at us from offscreen somewhere, and with an echo. And not seeing Debbie's face in closeup as she drinks in the landscape that Gerald has just charged with unexpected menace allows us to imagine her expression, and the imagining expands the humor of the scene past the obvious point that Gerald is an idiot. By very simple means, Cochran gets us thinking about more interesting—and funnier—issues: What does it really feel like, moment by moment, to live with a fool like this? What, other than outright derision, would be an appropriate response to inanity of this order? How long, exactly, does it take to regain your composure after you've had a dumbfounding, out-of-the-blue pronouncement like Gerald's laid on you? In addition to sheer stupefaction, there's a weird, sweet, hilarious kind of tact in Debbie's pause to consider her husband's statement. She's very careful with Gerald, and we sense that her caution is based partly on affection and partly on fear. The heroine of "My New Gun" is married to a blustering male egotist of the sort that doesn't take kindly to being contradicted, much less laughed at; he's a clearer and more present danger to her well-being than the army of bogeymen supposedly advancing on the Bender condo from the direction of the fourteenth hole.



Lena Headley, Grant Warnock, and Jeremy Irons in "Waterland."

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Cochran, who wrote as well as directed this picture, is a recent graduate of the Columbia University film school, and the assurance she shows in handling even a brief expository scene is astonishing. It's not just a matter of facility—of the ability to engineer audience-pleasing effects with smooth technique. Small decisions like placing the golf-course shot early in the scene and presenting Debbie's reaction in long shot rather than in closeup are indications of a natural and wholly personal style. They're choices that come out of the impulse to get *more* into every scene—to pass up the immediate, decisive audience response in favor of creating a mass of more ambiguous responses and teasingly suggestive possibilities, which may, down the line, give the movie a bigger payoff. "My New Gun" is a small-scale picture, and Cochran's style is clean, economical, unshowy; yet the movie never feels safe or trivial, because every detail is imbued with a real filmmaker's sensibility. It's in the rhythm of the scenes, her comic timing, her sense of where to put the camera—all the infinite tiny things that could be done in any number of ways but, done *this* way, link surprises and eccentricities with a fluency that makes them seem inevitable. This film-school graduate has the kind of "technique" that can't be taught; it's as elusive, both in its sources and in its effects, as a jazz singer's phrasing.

"My New Gun" is a picture that delights in fouling up the audience's expectations: every time you think you know where Cochran is going, she takes you somewhere else. She constructs a kind of inverted pyramid of unlikeliness, the whole thing balanced, precariously, on the initial absurdity of Gerald's decision that he and his wife need to be armed. The gun itself, which at first looks loaded with significance, proves relatively unimportant. For a while, it looms large in the characters' consciousness: on its first night in the Benders' home, Debbie is so nervous and distracted that she can't have sex with Gerald; later, she's awakened by a nightmare of the gun firing spontaneously in the drawer of their bedside table. As the movie goes along, though, the title firearm disappears from the screen for longer and longer stretches—crowded out by other sorts of dangers—and it plays no role in the picture's wild climax. By the end, the new gun is old news. The way Cochran uses it, the Benders' revolver finally seems just one object among many in the domestic suburban world that she has created; in terms of this story, the gun is a little more than a pretext and a lot less than a symbol.

The real subject of "My New Gun" is the heroine's changing relationship to the circumstances of her life, and especially her marriage. Gerald—with the doctor's arrogance that comes from knowing that anxious patients will hang on his every word and then accept unquestioningly whatever he tells them—dominates his wife completely. He knocks a pitcher of Martinis off the kitchen counter, and she picks up the pieces. When Debbie objects to the gun idea, he puts the brakes on the discussion with an impatient, stern-daddy pronouncement: "That's final." The movie doesn't portray Debbie as a cringing victim: she fights back. She just never wins. Her perspective is limited, bounded by (identical) condos on three sides and the golf course on the fourth. We see, as she doesn't, that the *last* thing she needs is better protection from the intrusions of the outside world. The movie contrives to remove Gerald from the household for a few days, and Debbie, on her own for a change, becomes embroiled in some pretty volatile outside-world action involving her across-the-street neighbor, Skippy (James LeGros). He's a scruffy young man with a goatee, a shifty manner, and a big crush on Debbie. Gerald, who loathes everyone who isn't exactly like him, is convinced that Skippy is a drug dealer, a Satan-worshipper, or a hit man, or perhaps all three. (Skippy claims to live with his mother, whom the Benders have never met; Gerald thinks of "Psycho.") Debbie isn't so sure; Skippy's manner with her is gentle and solicitous, and, God knows, he's easier to talk to than her husband is. Cochran and LeGros—who gives a wonderfully sly, seductive performance—keep us wondering about the character. Is Skippy a dangerous sociopath, and therefore a threat to the Benders' lives? Or is he a tenderhearted suitor, and therefore only a threat to their terrible marriage? What's this guy's story?

The comic grace of the picture's vision of suburbia is that Cochran shows us a world in which no one knows anyone else's story. The curious peer through their blinds or furtively size up their neighbors at the supermarket checkout counter. But their interest generally stops short of full involvement: embarrassment, or fear of turning up something really disturbing, cuts off the inquiry, reduces it to a quick take. Others, like smug Gerald, don't even know that there's more to know about how people live; any way of life that looks a bit strange (i.e., unlike that of a successful, well-dressed radiologist with a ravishing young wife) is horror-movie stuff, something to be repelled with deadly force. Cochran believes in doing justice to every kind of story, in prowling and rummaging through all these deceptively uniform-looking condos until she's found enough evidence to give each of her characters a real and individual history—a story that may make us laugh but also makes human sense. Debbie is Cochran's stand-in here, and Diane Lane's delicately funny performance conveys the movie's exploratory sensibility with thrilling clarity: she makes us feel the risky joy of venturing beyond your own narrow plot and becoming a part of someone else's story. One of the many surprises of "My New Gun" is the richness and beauty it imparts to the suburban setting—qualities deriving from interest in and respect for the vari-

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ety of experience that even the dullest landscapes contain. Cochran's condoland isn't a satirist's world, or a cartoonist's, or a fairy-tale teller's; it's more like a novelist's. Yet the sort of liberation that "My New Gun" proposes, and embodies, is the product of a true filmmaker's vision. Its heroine frees herself by throwing open the picture-window curtains and taking a longer and more penetrating look outside. At the end, she's totally, beautifully unprotected from what she sees.

Tom Crick (Jeremy Irons), the protagonist and narrator of Stephen Gyllenhaal's "Waterland," is another oppressed spirit in a hellish marriage; the story he's trapped in, however, is hermetic, inescapable, and has mirrors where the windows are supposed to be. He's a middle-aged history teacher immobilized not by outside forces but by his own past, which seems to have tangled and tightened inside him like a piece of string in a cat's stomach. Graham Swift's 1983 novel is a brilliant soliloquy, delivered by Crick to his captive secondary-school students, on the sources of his misery. (The hero's name is surely meant to remind us of Francis Crick, who was one of the discoverers of the structure of DNA—the spiral threads that encode and perpetuate genetic history in every cell.) The book is full of scholarly digressions on the culture and natural history of the fen country of East Anglia, the flat region—mostly land reclaimed from the sea—where Tom grew up, and where the events that effectively stopped the forward progress of his life took place. It's a determinedly, necessarily inward-looking novel: the reflections of a man who's stuck in the mud of his adolescent errors and has nothing to do but spin his intellectual wheels.

This is unpromising material for a movie. The chief virtue of the novel, which is Swift's staggering metaphorical agility, can't be reproduced adequately on the screen. (Even if it could, it would probably strike us as annoying and tiresome.) And the hero—a hopeless, defeated, rumpled-corduroy man, marking time with cleverness as he slides inexorably toward decrepitude and merciful extinction—isn't the sort that movie audiences tend to clasp to their bosoms. Yet the picture is, in its gray way, absorbing and often moving. The screenwriter, Peter Prince, has streamlined the novel's

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twisty narrative very intelligently; he manages the flashback structure adroitly, and he has retained the book's juiciest, most lurid episodes. (There are many; the novel aspires to be Anglicized Faulkner—"Absalom, Absalom!" with protective irony.) Gyllenhaal's direction is sometimes too studied—as in a few disastrous Fellini-like passages in which Crick and his students materialize in the midst of the flashback action—but it has some drive: even when the story is moving backward, Gyllenhaal keeps us looking forward, in anticipation of explanations and shocking disclosures. And he's good with the actors. Grant Warnock and Lena Headley, the young performers who play Tom and his wife-to-be, Mary, are remarkable: their adolescent gravity is convincing and touching. Sinead Cusack, as the grown-up Mary, doesn't have much screen time, but she is, in her best scenes, alarmingly vivid. And Irons' Tom Crick is a fascinating creation. The actor brings a whiff of something like madness to his character's middle-aged desperation, and thus saves it from seeming just another incarnation of the dull, low-horizon resignation familiar to audiences of English films and fiction about the educated middle class. Peter Finch has played roles like this, and so have Trevor Howard and Denholm Elliott; Dirk Bogarde has gone through these weary, shuffling paces dozens of times. They've all played men disappointed with life, but none has ever done it with more ferocity—with a greater sense of urgency to break the grip of past failure and get on with living—than Jeremy Irons does here. He lifts "Waterland" to the top of the rueful-retrospection class. He makes us feel that the past really is, as L. P. Hartley wrote in "The Go-Between," a foreign country: an awful, deranging place, like a prison colony. ♦

COME TOGETHER

by Michael Sragow

AFTER crowd-pleasing appearances in a slew of film festivals, "Zebrahead," an interracial teen romance set in Detroit, has finally arrived in commercial theatres. Unfortunately, the movie doesn't match the advance word. The first feature by a young writer-director named Anthony Drazan, "Zebrahead" makes a fumbling plea for integration and tolerance. Like too many low-budget independent American productions, it isn't as good as its intentions.

For about forty minutes, you're willing to go along with its loose style and predictable storytelling, partly because of the fresh Motor City locations and the cast of youthful unknowns, and partly because Drazan (unlike Spike Lee in "Jungle Fever") suggests that there could be a lasting bond between his Romeo, Zack (Michael Rapaport), and his Juliet, Nikki (N'Bushe Wright). Zack is a nice Jewish boy with crossover roots—his grandfather founded a downtown record shop that still stocks the black jazz and pop greats—and he's keen on the black culture that dominates his high school. He's also an aspiring music producer and the best friend of an openhearted rapper named Dee (DeShonn Castle), who happens to be Nikki's cousin. The beautiful Nikki, who has regal features and poetry-tinged eyes, is herself an outsider of sorts, having just moved to Detroit from Brooklyn. Drazan's strongest moments as a moviemaker come when the message he and the kids convey is "no big deal." The scenes of Zack cruising the school with Dee or working in the kitchen of an Italian restaurant boast a melting-pot conviviality. The ethnic and racial joshing that goes on is rueful, wary, and sometimes actually affectionate—never malicious, as it is in so many contemporary movies.

But even the early sequences show evidence of trickle-down portentousness, especially in the recurring tableau of a haggard city dweller lighting fires in the industrial waste that seeps into his yard from a nearby plant. And whenever Drazan tries to score points he loses his ease and fluidity. The father-and-son scenes are almost symmetrical in their clumsiness: Dee's dad, Otis (Paul Butler), sounding off to Zack about white men exploiting black talent, and Zack's widowed, randy dad, Richard (Ray Sharkey), welcoming Nikki into their home in a way that drives his son crazy. Zack overreacts to everything Richard does, whether he's asking Zack and

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Nikki if they took precautions during sex, offering them Chinese food, or grooving on the Philadelphia sound of Harold Melvin and the Blue Notes. Is Zack afraid that Richard will treat Nikki as disrespectfully as he does his own "dates"? Does he think that his father's riff on R. & B. music is too forced an attempt to connect with the black girl? (It's a natural subject for Richard; he took over the family business, and opened a second record shop in a mall.) Or is Ray Sharkey so charismatic an actor that he throws the scene out of whack? Here it's impossible to know what Drazan wants us to feel. In the rest of the film, it's far too clear.

The movie begins its downhill slide when Zack's white ex-girlfriend invites him and Nikki to an otherwise all-white party, with disastrous results. Zack betrays an unforeseen puerile streak: pressed to describe making love with a black girl, he resorts to a locker-room vulgarism. Nikki overhears him and storms out. From then on, the movie gets increasingly melodramatic; Drazan's characters and ideas become trite and obvious. Zack, looking more and more ineffectual, turns to Dee for wisdom about black women. And Nikki, feeling dissed, is suddenly willing to explore the soft side of an obstreperous black hoodlum. The audience knows this guy is trouble as soon as it hears that his name is Nut. (Ron Johnson puts across the combination of hurt and rebelliousness that would attract Nikki to Nut. But the gimmick of Nut's sheltering a couple of kittens is too easy.) When Nut's gun starts blazing, the movie spirals into West Side Storyland. Even the high-school principal, previously viewed as a witty fellow, says things like "Always, always, always, always, always, always, always stick with your tribe." (That's just what Anita sang in "West Side Story": "One of your own kind, stick to your own kind.") The film ends with black racists and white racists duking it out in the hallway as Nikki and Zack embrace and comfort each other. In a mere hundred minutes, the director takes two likable, potentially complex characters and reduces them to poster kids promoting racial understanding.

LIKE "Zebrahead," Steve Anderson's "South Central" is a feature by a fledgling writer-director made possible in part by the clout of Oliver Stone. (Stone was an executive producer on both pictures, and his production partner, Janet Yang, who was also an executive producer on "Zebrahead," co-produced this film with William B. Steakley.) Unlike "Zebrahead," "South Central" was tossed into theatres with little publicity and few press screenings. But it's the tougher and more affecting movie. Anderson hopes to flash a warning signal about the dead-end values of gang life and at the same time leave viewers with an inspirational message about the power of paternal love. Despite bald exposition and didactic speechifying, he succeeds. Anderson and his key players—Glenn Plummer and Bryon Keith Minns as the leaders of a Crips-like L.A. gang called the Deuces, Carl Lumbly as Plummer's jailhouse mentor, and Christian Coleman as Plummer's ten-year-old son—give their three-act story stouthearted conviction. The movie starts in 1981, when Plummer emerges from a year behind bars and the Deuces prepare to consolidate their hold on their South Central L.A. neighborhood by cornering the market on a handy new form of cocaine—crack. Plummer discovers that his PCP-hooked woman (LaRita Shelby) has been hanging out with the Deuces' chief competitor, a "Kansas City pimp" and "smack man" (Kevin Best). What's most important is that Shelby introduces Plummer to his baby son.

Sometimes all a director has to do is establish and sustain the proper focus. From the instant Anderson brings the infant (played by Allan and Alvin Hatcher) into the melodrama, the movie's emotional current develops a tidal pull. This baby doesn't stay home with Mom—he accompanies the Deuces on a tour of their drug operation, and gets stuck with his dad when Best ambushes him. By keeping the baby in the frame with Plummer, Anderson is able to depict a degraded present and presage an endangered future. Soon Minns eggs Plummer on to commit an execution-style murder, and it eventually sends him into the slammer. The child is with Plummer at the time of his arrest, and the movie deepens as Anderson dissolves from the back of the infant's head to the sculpted haircut of

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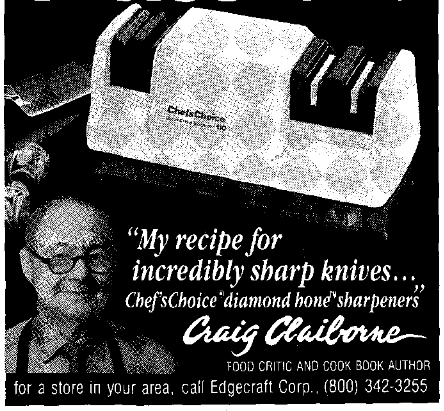

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the growing homeboy (Coleman) ten years later.

With Plummer in the joint, Minns is the Deuces' single and unquestioned leader; he puts Coleman on the gang's payroll as a car-stereo thief, but a shotgun blast interrupts the boy's career. It's as if his father were the one who gets hit. Minns' willingness to endanger Coleman's life enrages Plummer, who decides to leave the gang and go it alone—a risky proposition in a prison dominated by the Deuces, on one hand, and an Aryan gang, on the other. Dedicating himself to winning parole and redeeming his son, he attracts the support of the Black Muslim played by Lumbly, who is pledged to break the "cycle of hate" that locks black men into one vendetta after another. You can excuse textbook phrases like "cycle of hate," and the academic crosscutting between Plummer's education with Lumbly and Coleman's rehabilitation in a hospital, because of how much Anderson packs in about jailhouse codes and hand-me-down machismo. The movie has been criticized for over-the-top performances, and there *is* an out-of-control characterization of a Deuce too aptly nicknamed Loco (an L.A. relative of Nut?). But when actors like Minns and Best posture, they do it purposefully and skillfully. Their "attitude" expresses the gangster's determination to rule the street, and Lumbly breaks Plummer out of this greed-and-vengeance-driven stance. Although Lumbly is saddled with the bulk of the film's lectures, he's passionate and commanding—he roots the impulse to help Plummer in his character's own rage and failure as a father. And there's no black-matinée-idol sheen to Plummer, whose face tends toward surliness and sullenness. While he doesn't rub away the edges of this onetime gang hero, he reveals a reservoir of intelligence and tenderness, and enough gnarly independence to indicate that he can make it without the Deuces. Coleman displays quicksilver child-actor timing. In the film's most frightening bit, he reverts to gang attitude in a split second, and scares off a group of kids who are about to confront him. "South Central" sees life in the 'hood as a survival drama, plain and simple—and pleads for family responsibility and nonviolence as its inhabitants' last chance. ♦

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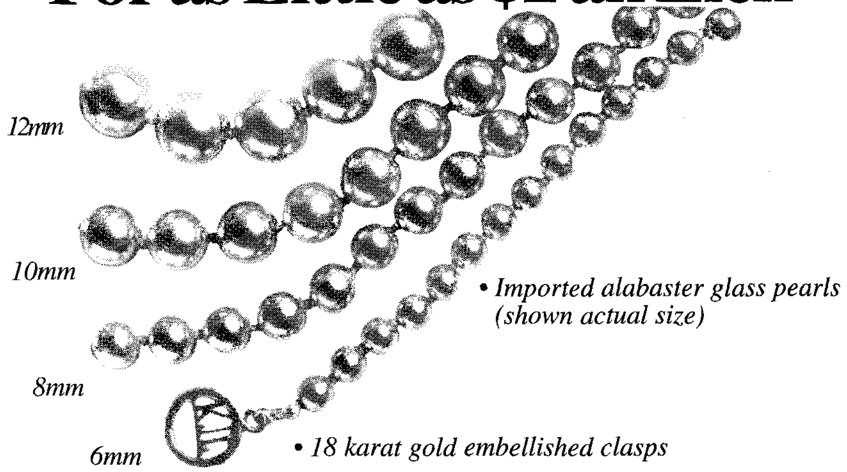

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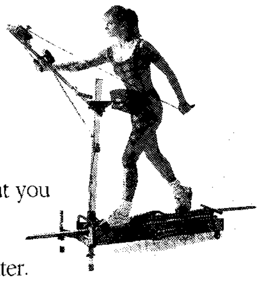

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CHEZ ROSENSWEIG

by Edith Oliver

ADMIRERS of Wendy Wasserstein (fan club may be more like it) will be relieved to know that she is as romantic as ever, and that her head is in the right place, too, while her tongue remains safely in her cheek. I use the word "romantic" because her new play, "The Sisters Rosensweig," at the Mitzi Newhouse, is more in tune with her "Isn't It Romantic," of some years ago, than with the recent "Heidi Chronicles." "The Sisters Rosensweig" takes place in the elegant London sitting room of Sara Goode, née Rosensweig, a twice-divorced American Jew who is the European director of the Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank. (It's interesting to note that the small stage of the Mitzi can, under the right auspices, seem as spacious and lavish as any in town; in this instance, the auspices are John Lee Beatty's, and the exquisite lighting is by Pat Collins.) The occasion that launches the action is the celebration of Sara's fifty-fourth birthday, and her two younger—but not much younger—sisters are coming to her house to celebrate. They are Pfeni, a free-lance travel writer, and Gorgeous, a wife and mother who is about to embark on a personal-advice TV program but at the moment is shepherding a group of Jewish ladies on a pilgrimage to the Crown Jewels. (She bears a more than incidental resemblance, by the way, to Dr. Ruth.) We begin with Pfeni's arrival: Sara asks her to "talk to" her rebellious daughter, who plans to leave for Lithuania with her left-wing working-class boyfriend as soon as the party is over. Then Pfeni's beau, a bright bisexual director, brimming with high spirits and bitchy anecdotes, arrives; he, in turn, has invited an associate of his from America. The associate is a hearty, noisy Jewish manufacturer of fake fur who, once established as a guest, refuses to budge, determined to crash this family occasion. He is also determined to woo and win Sara, who, although her career is moving successfully along, feels she has come to a personal stop.

The funny incidents and the funny lines fly by, so quickly that one is almost unaware that a story is being told, and the laughter is all but continuous until Pfeni's beau confesses that he misses men ("So do I," she says), and their inevitable breakup leaves her disheartened. By the end of the play, Sara, having secretly crept up to bed with the brash visiting American—"How was it?" asks each of her sisters the morning after—realizes that many emotional possibilities are still open. Nothing is over—not even life with daughter. Pfeni pulls herself together, and cheerfully lights out for foreign parts, ready to resume her career; and dear Gorgeous, having been presented with a pink outfit from Chanel by her grateful ladies, decides to cash it in and go home to that TV program and her husband and children. The mood is warm and *gemütlich* but never foolish. Jean Kerr once described a kind of play that gave her a pain as "an Irish aren't-we-adorable?" "The Sisters Rosensweig" is not a Jewish "aren't-we-adorable?" There isn't a sentimental key in Wendy Wasserstein's typewriter.

The performance, under the direction of Daniel Sullivan, is superb. Jane Alexander is remarkable as Sara Goode; Frances McDormand and Madeline Kahn are Pfeni and Gorgeous. Robert Klein, a one-man explosion of sex and mirth, is the visiting American furrier; John Vickery is a blithe spirit if ever there was one; Patrick Fitzgerald is almost irresistible as the boyfriend, his words lightly tinged with brogue; Rex Robbins is an upper-class diplomat invited for the festivities; and Julie Dretzin, making her theatre début, is Sara's daughter. (Welcome!) The casting is fine throughout and, in the case of Miss Alexander, inspired. Who would have thought the lady to have had so much comedy in her? ♦

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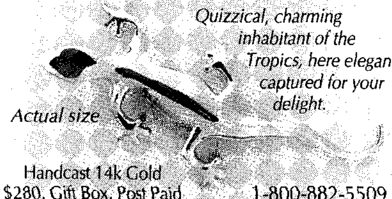

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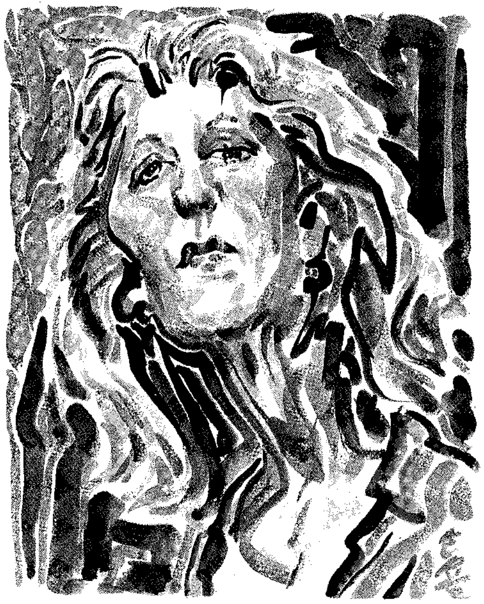
BOOKS

THE ROMANTIC CLIMACTERIC

by Katha Pollitt

IT seems only yesterday that Germaine Greer was exhorting young women to throw away their inhibitions, their engagement rings, and their underpants. With the publication of "The Female Eunuch," in 1970, Greer burst into international celebrity—an inescapable media presence, brash, brilliant, and beautiful, as exotically plumed as some wild Australian bird, and equally given to preening. Her love affairs were legendary, her admonitions—Flaunt your tampons! Taste your menstrual blood! Stop expecting men to take care of you! Live!—a heady mixture of rebellion and flirtatiousness. While the press, then as now, delighted to portray the women's movement as motivated by hatred of men and led by frumps and neurotics, it made an exception for Greer. She was, as *Life* put it, the "saucy feminist even men like," and the one who never let men forget how much she liked them.

Well, that was then; this is now. Having publicly mourned her inability to get pregnant in her forties—and having produced "Sex and Destiny," an anti-contraception polemic and paean to Third World motherhood—Greer has passed through menopause and emerged, in her early fifties, on the other side. It was hardly to be expected that she would experience the transition calmly: rage and passion have always been her strong suits. (Indeed, since "Sex and Destiny" they have sometimes seemed to be her only suits.) Still, among the millions of female baby boomers now moving toward middle age there must be many whose hearts leaped up when they beheld the publisher's announcement of "The Change: Women, Aging and the Menopause" (Knopf; $24). Who better than Greer to deploy a fiery contrarian sword against society's contempt for older women, drug-company hormone pushing, and the hand-wringing to be found in Gail Sheehy's best-selling "The Silent Passage," in which woman after woman mops her hot-flashing brow and wails "Why can't I be me anymore?"


Germaine Greer: Out of the bedroom and into the herb garden.

PHILIP BURKE

Greer does brandish a fiery contrarian sword in "The Change." But something has gone terribly wrong. Perhaps she dashed the book off too quickly: repeated sentences, haphazard organization, the grab-bag inclusion of irrelevant material (a five-page bone-dry synopsis of Iris Murdoch's novel "Bruno's Dream," for instance) all suggest a rush to publish. Or perhaps she was overwhelmed by the scope of her task—disputing just about everything that has been thought, said, written, and done regarding women and age for the last two hundred years—and lost the thread of her arguments in the general contentiousness. That would explain why she could spend pages excoriating doctors for handing out estrogen like candy and then, noting that the hormone does seem to make women feel better, reverse gears and "question the morality" of withholding it. In any case, "The Change" is a maddening and frustrating book, in which passages of brilliance, wit, and lyricism alternate with murky and carelessly reported science, crackpot health advice, and a portrait of modern female aging that goes well beyond the evidence in its gloom and despair. And that, given the real difficulties that women face as they get older, is saying a lot.

"The Change" begins promisingly, with a rousing indictment of modern attitudes toward older women. Greer notes with some bitterness that our supposedly youth-crazed culture is really a girl-crazed culture: men acquire social power along with wrinkles and gray hair, and often a young bride or mistress, too, while their female contemporaries are often consigned to the sexual scrap heap, if not, indeed, the poorhouse. She quotes a friend on the May-November couples around them in a restaurant. " 'It's bloody unfair. Those men can have their pick of women of any age. They can go on for years, and here we are, finished. They wouldn't even look at us.' The unkind sunlight showed every sag, every pucker, every bluish shadow, every mole, every freckle in our fifty-year-old faces. When we beckoned to the waiter he seemed not to see us."

Greer has a word for what that waiter feels: "anophobia," the irrational fear and hatred of old women. In many pre-industrial societies, she argues in a somewhat hedged reprise of "Sex and Destiny," older women are vigorous and respected members of extended families, and, while ultimately subject to men, wield a good deal of informal social power. It is only in the modern West, where women are valued primarily as sex objects, families are small and isolated, and "hostility to the mother . . . is an index of mental health," that the aging woman is an outcast—expected to be unobtrusive, compliant, and grateful for any crumbs of attention that fall her way. Eventually, when he has nothing better to do, that waiter will amble over to her table.

Surrounded as women are by the negative stereotypes of popular culture—harridan mothers-in-law, strident shoppers, comical grandmas—and facing, moreover, the actual fact of their declining value in the sexual marketplace, it's hardly surprising that many regard the prospect of aging with anxiety, or that a vast beauty-exercise-surgery-quackery industry has arisen to exploit their fears while seeming to soothe them. Today, women are told that with enough effort, time, and, of course, money the years

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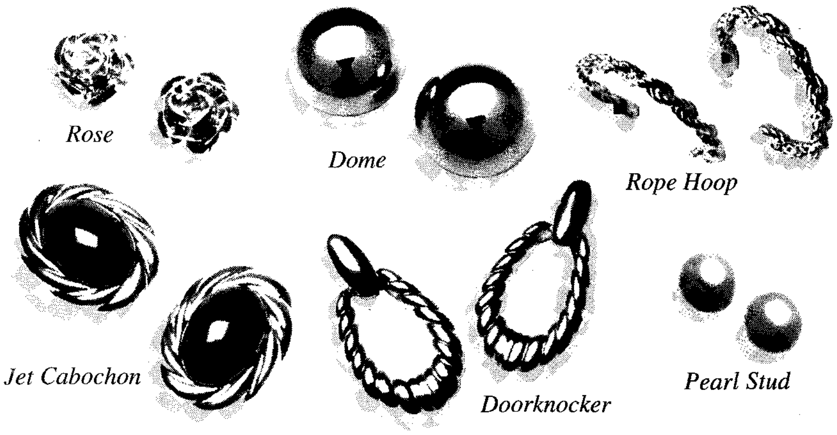

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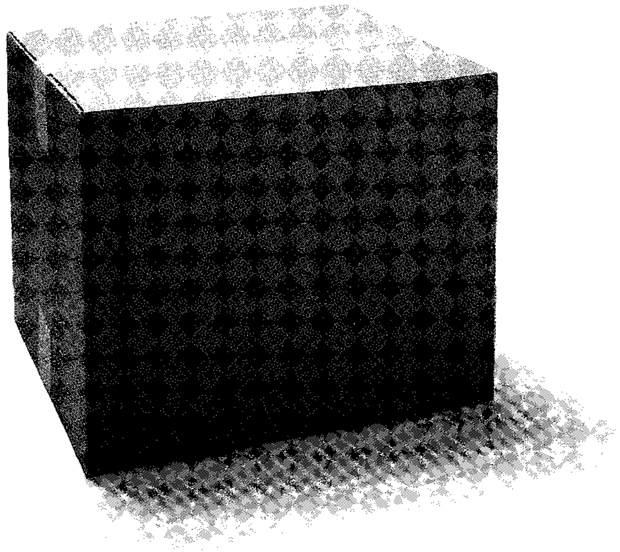

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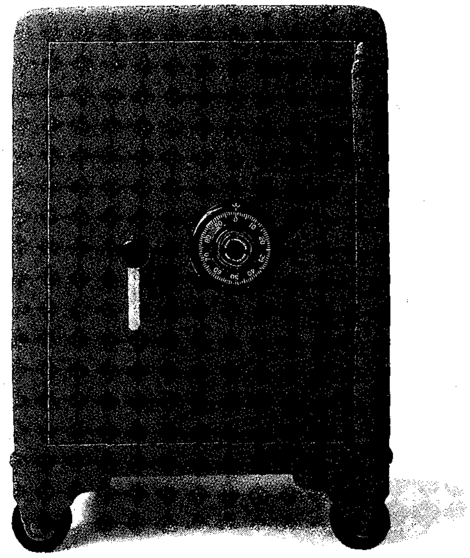

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need hold no terrors: celebrities like Jane Fonda, Cher, and Joan Collins are touted—and tout themselves—as proof. But, as Greer shrewdly points out, the cult of these bionic sexpots only reinforces the prejudice against the aging female. To urge women to ape youth with an "imitation body" is to declare unacceptable the body they really have.

No wonder the male-dominated medical establishment regards menopause as a trauma and a tragedy. It marks the end of a woman's usefulness to men, and since in Greer's view society permits her no other purpose, doctors are quick to offer, and some women to accept, alarming remedies. (Greer has a scary chapter on the history of useless, painful, and sometimes even fatal treatments for menopause: electric shocks to the womb, X rays, animal-gland extracts, hysterectomy, hormone cocktails.) A woman who finds menopause rough going is invariably blamed for her symptoms: she had no children or was "overinvested" in maternity; dulled herself with domesticity or masculinized herself in the workplace; staked all on romance or failed to make hay while the sun shone. Declining sexual interest in middle-aged marriages is perceived as the woman's problem: if her husband withdraws, it's because she is sagging and nagging; if she does, it's her hormones. Why not, Greer pointedly inquires, ask if the man is a sensitive lover, an affectionate and respectful partner? Maybe *he* has let himself go: "Many a man who was attractive and amusing at twenty is a pompous old bore at fifty." If intercourse has become painful (at menopause the vaginal walls become thinner and drier), why dose the woman with potentially dangerous hormones so that she can have more bad sex, instead of proposing more imaginative ways of lovemaking—or just letting her call it quits?

That, in fact, is Greer's suggestion to women: Give up. It's degrading to turn yourself into a geisha for a man who thinks he's doing you a favor by sticking around. Anyway, it won't work. No one mistakes a chemical peel for the rose-petal skin of youth. To the plaintive question "Is one never in this life to be allowed to let oneself go?" Greer offers a bold answer: Yes! Right now! Today!

Greer wants women to welcome menopause—she prefers the old-fashioned term "climacteric"—as a sweeping natural transition. Yes, it is physically turbulent: like Sheehy, Greer dismisses women who pass through it easily—the vast majority, actually, although you'd never know it from either writer—as anomalous, if not liars. And, yes, it is sad: a time to take stock, to mourn old losses, and to come to terms with death. But it also holds out the promise of freedom and tranquillity: "Autumn can be golden, milder and warmer than summer, and is the most productive season of the year." Rejected by men, and thus freed from "the white slavery of attraction duty," the female eunuch can become, at last, "the female woman": a sibyl, a witch, a crone.

Greer's portrait of cronehood is so charming, so spirited, so seductively rendered—especially when it's contrasted with the situation of the wistful wives, desperate party girls, and breast-implanted exercise addicts which for her constitutes the only alternative—that the reader may find herself barely able to wait. Why *not* take up nature study, herbal medicine, travel, contemplation? Make women friends—and a fuss if you're ignored by the waiter! One notes a certain class bias here, an assumption of leisure and posh tastes: no bowling, or volunteering at the local hospital—or, apparently, earning a living, either. There's an anti-intellectual bias, too: the graying Eternal Feminine is not to sign up for courses at the New School. Still, who wouldn't like to sink into the Bath for Melancholy she cites from an Old English receipt book ("Take mallowes pellitory of the wall, of each three handfulls; Camomell flowers, Mellelot flowers, of each one handfull; hollyhocks two handfulls")? Or stroll beside the sea with a girlhood chum, like the Sicilian matrons who, before the days of tourism, had the island beaches to themselves? Or start a huge garden, like Lady Mary Wortley Montagu—or Greer, a famous gardener herself? Greer calls us to middle age as to a grand spiritual adventure, and one with distinguished literary antecedents, too. This must be the only book ever written on women's health that illustrates its advice with seventeenth-century poetry and the letters of Mme. de Sévigné.

But there's a catch—several catches, actually. The would-be crone must become her own doctor—a dangerous prospect if she uses Greer's incompre-

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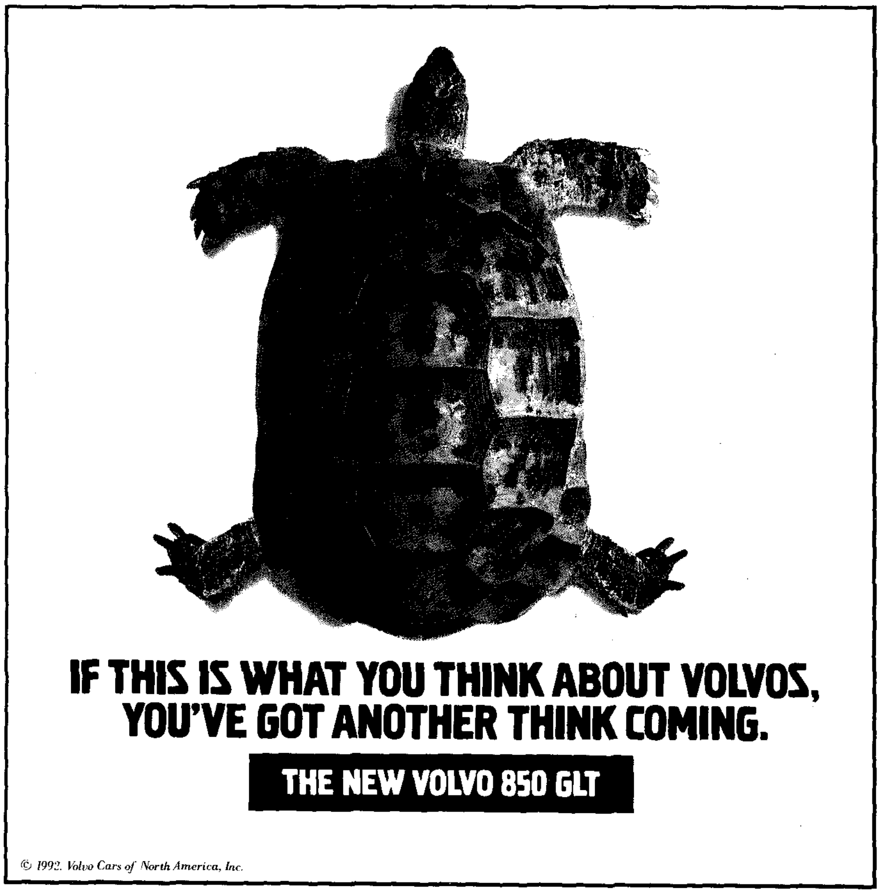
IF THIS IS WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT VOLVOS, YOU'VE GOT ANOTHER THINK COMING.

THE NEW VOLVO 850 GLT

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hensible chapters on herbal and homeopathic medicine as a guide. (Henbane, for example, is a sedative on one page and a poison on another.) She must follow a diet that seems punitive in its frugality. (Giving up smoking and hard drinking makes sense, but red meat, cheese, coffee, tea, wine, beer, and chocolate?)

And—but perhaps you suspected this was coming—barring a miracle, she must give up sex. Now, this is indeed strange, because Greer herself presents a whole gallery of celebrated women who, without benefit of plastic surgery, found romance in mid-life and beyond. It is almost as though she began "The Change" with the idea of championing mature female sexuality—a casual reader might even think she has done so—and suddenly reversed herself in mid-book. One way or another, she dismantles her shining examples: in Colette's last years, her much younger husband never saw her "devastated body" or her face without its "powdered mask"; George Eliot's husband jumped out of the window on their honeymoon; Elizabeth Barrett Browning grew disenchanted with her Robert; Simone de Beauvoir's mid-life affair with Claude Lanzmann "fizzled out" after ten years. "Fizzled out" seems an odd term in this context—a decade is not exactly a summer romance—but it shows how determined Greer is to take a negative view of middle-aged sexuality. For men and women alike, it is unaesthetic and faintly grotesque, but for women it is also potentially tragic, because it exposes them to humiliation and exploitation at the hands of layabouts, philanderers, bisexual flirts, and neurasthenics. Who else, the clear implication runs, would even pretend to be interested? The women whose libido vanishes with menopause are, for Greer, "the lucky ones."

Could it be that Greer is a bit of an anophobe herself? Certainly she seems in a hurry to hustle women out of the bedroom and into the herb garden: by the end of "The Change," she is lauding peasant cultures in which women don the black dress of matronly celibacy at thirty-five. One waits in vain for her to make the obvious rejoinder to our culture's hard view of older women's sexuality, to challenge the equation of female attractiveness with youth. Why, after all, should not a lined face and gray hair connote in women, as they do in men, experience, strength, staying

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power, character, sexual self-knowledge? Must older women give up being sexual subjects because Hollywood casting directors do not regard them as sexual objects? Greer cannot challenge the dominant masculine view because, in her heart, she shares it. The best she can do is caricature middle-aged men as "fat, beefy, beery, smelly, tobacco-stained" satyrs and recommend that older women who absolutely can't do without sex take boys (or women) as lovers.

How accurate is the picture of contemporary female middle age presented in "The Change"? Although Greer's books are packed with data, she has never let inconvenient facts stand in the way of her enthusiasms. In "The Female Eunuch," sex had to hold no dangers, and so she pooh-poohed domestic violence as mostly idle threats that the occasional foolhardy woman drove her man to carry out. (The basis of this extraordinary assertion? Greer's affairs with two young roughnecks, who, despite their criminal records, behaved like perfect gentlemen.) "Sex and Destiny"'s romantic portrait of Third World womanly life dismissed clitoridectomy—inflicted on millions of African, Asian, and Middle Eastern girls each year—in a single sentence. "The Change," too, ignores reality when it contradicts theory—only this time it's the good news, not the bad, that gets left out.

So, for the record, numerous studies demonstrate that most menopausal women do not, as Greer thinks, regard the cessation of ovulation with anguish or dread, do not undergo bouts of irrationality and rage, and do not lose their libido, their partner, or both. Middle-aged women are actually a fairly cheerful group—perhaps because few of them are living the contracted, empty-nest, husband-focussed domestic life that Greer imagines is still the contemporary norm. Nor is middle-aged and elderly married sex typically the quasi rape Greer imagines, in which a dirty old man subjects his estrogen-drugged wife to beastly practices while he fantasizes about young girls. According to one recent study, couples who make love after sixty are the happiest in America, and the more they make love—and not just in the missionary position, either—the happier they are.

It is curious that Greer, who began her career as a sexual swashbuckler,

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should end up preaching celibacy. There are doubtless many who will see this intellectual trajectory as a powerful rebuke to feminist hopes of equality. If biology is the culprit—if men are programmed to desire only youth and fertility, and if estrogen, as Greer claims in a particularly paranoid passage, is the "biddability" hormone that keeps women under the male thumb during their childbearing years—then sexism really is destiny, from which menopause is the sole hope of escape. But a feminism that can envision freedom and self-determination only at the margins of the female life cycle—before twelve and after fifty—has surely taken a wrong turn somewhere.

Yet Greer has never really been a feminist, although the media labelled her one. She has no interest in political action or collective solutions to individual problems, no skepticism toward essentialist accounts of sexual difference, and no hope that men can change their personal priorities or that women can obtain an equal share of economic or political power—the "spiritual" power of cronehood is the best women can manage. What she is is a romantic egotist—a dramatizer of her own exemplary life—and a critic of modernity. In the former capacity, she resembles no one so much as her old antagonist Norman Mailer; in the latter, the Mexican priest and sociologist Ivan Illich, whose attacks on Western medicine and Western feminism her own work closely parallels. She has never been able to hold all the aspects of women's lives—sex, maternity, work, love, domesticity, passion, reason—in her mind at the same time. She has always seen femininity through the lens of her most recent life crisis, and called on all women to jettison whatever hopes and behaviors have just proved problematical for her. When she was a sexual freebooter, monogamy and children were traps. When she wanted a child, contraception and sexual egalitarianism were suddenly rationalist plots against nature's plan for true female happiness. Now, as she has repeatedly announced, she's through with the whole business—sex, romance, men—and so we must all hang up our spurs and join her in a nice cup of henbane. "The Change" is an original and provocative book. But the only woman who is fully reflected in its pages is the one who wrote it. ♦

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BOOKS

SHE'S OLD-FASHIONED

by Deborah Garrison

SUSAN MINOT'S women are lonely in love. They're secretive and self-protective—and the men they fall for aren't particularly attentive or understanding. Minot's women are always brooding, in private, on the danger and pleasure and folly of their amorous attachments. Minot's new novel (she's also the author of "Monkeys," a best-seller in 1986) is a fuller study of romantic foolishness, an enlargement of the snapshots of women coping with desire which have been the staple of her short fiction.

In "Folly" (Houghton Mifflin; $19.95) Minot takes age-old riddles about love and marriage—about lust and marriage, really—and gives them a peculiar twist. The book spans twenty years, beginning during the First World War, and it is written as nearly as possible as though it had been written then. It's a Whartonesque age of innocence recaptured—not by looking backward at those distant people but by trying to view them the way they viewed themselves. These pre-Second World War characters are to be seen with prewar eyes, described in prewar cadences only. The antique instrument itself is part of the fiction, and Minot has to make up its tonalities and timbre as she goes along. She wants to feel the innocence of being a girl in that time—and, for that matter, of being a writer in that time—from the inside out, stripping not only her characters but the narration itself of any postmodern worldliness. She plunges right in on the first page as though she *were* Edith Wharton:

> I'm afraid there's been a change of plan, Mr. Eliot said. He stood in the dining room where Lilian was having her breakfast and reading a book. Her father had completed his breakfast some time before, having risen as usual at dawn. There are to be no guests at dinner tonight.

Wistful thinking: Susan Minot's characters still love in vain.

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At first, this return to the world of twenty-year-old virgins and artful billets-doux feels—how could it not?—overly deliberate and self-conscious. It's hard not to balk, watching the author cast herself back into this stiffer, quaint time, as though she were playing dressup in her grandmother's clothes. (In fact, Lilian and her slightly dashing, rebellious older brother, Arthur, are, if not the literal grandparents of the children in "Monkeys," their geographical and spiritual grandparents.) But why write about love, or anything else, from this creaky, old-fashioned perspective? Wouldn't the author be able to move more freely in less constricting late-twentieth-century dress, to say more about these people?

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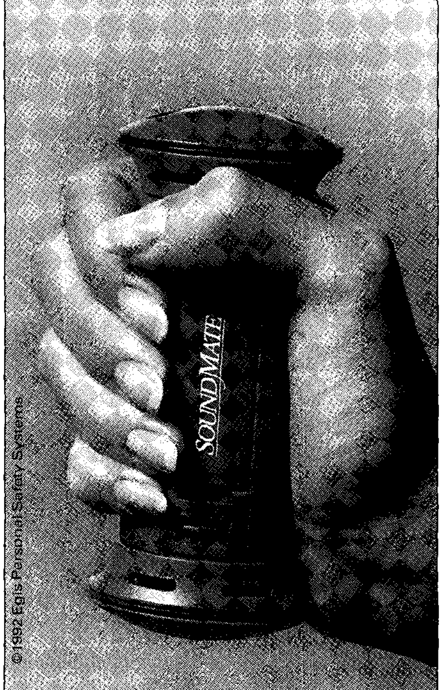

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wants to say. Minot is not the kind of writer who draws stunningly precise characters; what she does instead is describe, masterfully, the invisible air around and between people. (One of the pleasures of "Monkeys" is the image of two of the sisters sharing a cigarette in the car: they don't need to take their eyes off the road in order to pass the cigarette smoothly back and forth.) Minot doesn't study individuals so much as the properties—the color and temperature and motion—of the substance they're swimming in. Even in those opening lines, before we're acquainted with Mr. Eliot and Lilian, Minot conveys without explanation the presence of mind that twenty-year-old girls of a certain stripe were required to possess in those days if they wanted to marry, or to have love affairs; whatever was done had to be done under Father's watchful eye, or just outside his field of vision. How did those young women manage it, knowing virtually nothing about the mechanics of sex itself—probably not even knowing the names of the relevant organs in their own bodies? They were literally strangers to themselves, and, as such, they are perhaps purer vessels than self-aware contemporary characters could be for carrying Minot's message about the illusions of love, and the particular brand of loneliness that comes in love's wake.

When Minot restricts herself to the standard fare of Lilian's Boston social life and the anxieties of maidenhood, her "period" language feels overserious, like a flattened-out, unfunny parody:

> Had she drawn special attention from him? It gave her a superior feeling to think so. Her thoughts were interrupted by Emmet Smith's whining at Elsie Sears who disagreed with him about the criteria needed to make the Social Register. It was the usual talk at tea, yet Lilian felt the world was not so usual. She supposed it was the war.

"The war" is invoked often, with a kind of looming literary vagueness that isn't convincing. And there's something maddeningly fuzzy about Lilian and her crush Walter's first furtive embrace: "She'd never imagined such an altering. It was as if she'd become velvet blackness. Her head was no longer of any consequence, and her body felt so many new things." It's a relief, after the two come up briefly for air, when the author contents herself with "He kissed her again and the miraculous disturbance continued." Less, even in this limited vocabulary, is more.

But when Minot takes her tightly buttoned-up prose out of its usual chaste arena of operations—not merely aping it but turning it to a new use—that wooden, imitative quality is gone, replaced by a bracing freshness. One summer afternoon on the coast of Maine (the war is over now, and Walter has stayed on in France, having jilted Lilian without ever quite explaining himself), Lilian swims out into the cold bay and spies a young couple at play on their boat, which is anchored at a distance from where her own family is picnicking:

> A woman's head rose from the cockpit. Her hair was cut in a bob and her neck was tan. She called to the man, then stepped out on deck. She was wearing a pale Japanese robe which flapped around her knees, a sort of dressing gown. She brushed back the hair from one eye as she stood nearby watching the man. Suddenly she leapt backwards—the man had sprung up after her. He caught hold of her shoulders and the two of them wrestled against the rope railing, laughing. . . . He let her go and rested on one leg, waiting, arms crossed. The woman hesitated, then crumpled forward, folding around herself, down onto her knees—Lilian's heart beat, watching—then she crouched over completely and put her head to the deck and seemed to kiss the man's feet. Her face turned up to him. Their laughter had changed. She knelt up and put her hands on his hips. Her elbows stuck out to the side so the flap of her sleeves fluttered down. The man glanced around him, and for one dazzling moment Lilian thought he spotted her dark seal head in the water, but his gaze swept by like a lighthouse beam—he did not see anyone. He turned back to the woman below him, his chin down to his chest, and touched the top of her head, guiding it. The head had begun to move.

Lilian is stunned by this tableau, but then she has reason to be, never having seen anything like it before. The surprising thing is that the reader is stunned, too: Minot's self-imposed tunnel vision gives the scene a sparkling precision. When she says the woman "knelt up," we know exactly what's meant—and we reëxperience the exaggerated physical accuracy with which we see something for the first time, the backwardness of seeing a head moving before knowing why it moves. And Minot's faintly disingenuous retro tone recalls to us in a flash the way that even a moment of first perception carries a whiff of the familiar. We get the uncanny sense that in some uncharted and unexpressed part of herself

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21 MONDAY
7:30 Agency Meeting
1pm Chin Chin with Ellen
22 TUESDAY
Drop off car for inspection
10:15 Meet with lawyers to discuss deposition
Racquetball
23 WEDNESDAY
10am Department meeting - survey results
12:15 Jill and Frank - to discuss new construction
2pm Foundation meeting
24 THURSDAY
10am Margaret Cohen
Racquetball
25 FRIDAY
10am Eva Phillips - discuss article
6pm Drinks
26 SATURDAY
9:30 Scooter to vet
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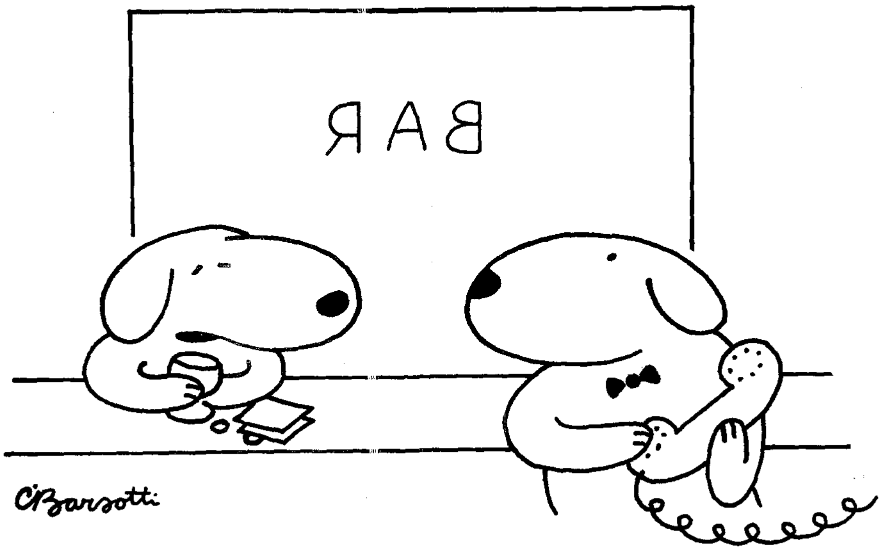
Lilian knew already all of what she saw displayed before her.

MINOT'S appeal as a writer—apart from her obvious talent as a stylist—resides in her ability to steal up and pounce on these moments of uncanny recognition, and to make the reader experience their disjunction right along with her characters. In "Folly" Minot's task is complicated by young Lilian's relative lack of self-knowledge—her lack, in fact, of any language in which matters of deep feeling and self-perception could be plumbed. If Minot is going to evoke, for example, the disturbing sense of alienation that can be felt even in the midst of an intimate relationship between a man and a woman, she must do it from Lilian's limited point of view, in Lilian's fledgling vocabulary. Setting the book in Boston society in the early part of the century makes Minot's job twice as difficult, by adding the further constraints of New England propriety and reticence. Lilian and Arthur aren't allowed to "gossip" at dinner—and gossip amounts to passing on any unpleasant news about anyone. (Arthur breaks this rule constantly, while Lilian looks on and admires him for his spunk.) Mr. Eliot is all Wasp principle and repression; when Lilian tries in vain to articulate what it is she wants in a man—the ingredient that young Tommy Lattimore just doesn't have—she reminds herself that "her father would say if there were no words for it, it did not exist." And, of course, she has to meet her suitors over tea in her parents' parlor, and will end up marrying and sharing her bed with a man she has merely kissed once or twice.

For she does marry—not the dark horse Walter Vail but, years later, a suitor named Gilbert Finch, an athlete who doesn't speak much but fixes his intense gaze on Lilian and makes her feel secure and comfortable and completely adored. Here is a good Boston fellow who likes more than anything else to go bird-watching—and, as Lilian soon finds out, drinks too much after dinner when he gets into one of his strained, dark moods. (No remedy for it: "In her family it was never done to talk to a man in a mood.") Not unlike Minot's more savvy, contemporary women, Lilian loses her illusions about marriage almost immediately. It occurs to her, driving with Gilbert through a misty Scotland land-



"Tell him to fetch his own damn slippers."

• •

scape during her honeymoon, "that the feeling now in the car may have been happier, but it was also more dull. Gilbert's presence beside her, his cigar-scented wool jacket, his soft fingers, kept out the harshness of the world. . . . What softness she felt!" This "softness," the lack of sharp edges, continues through the watercolor scenes of her marriage: the separateness of his office life and her life at home (tending the children, giving instructions to the cook), the way that in bed "he would sometimes turn to her at night and sometimes not" (more often not after the children are born, and apparently she would never "turn to" him). All this leaves ample room in Lilian for a nagging loneliness, and for doubts about the seeming happiness of other wives. Lilian's favorite woman friend is nervous, dreamy Irene Minter, who ventures awkwardly at a ladies' luncheon one afternoon to ask why life doesn't feel full of coincidences and adventures, the way it does in books. Lilian's response is that a book about life as it really is would be too dull. She is not only lonely but bored, primed for the eventual return of Walter Vail—who does, in fact, become her lover. Lilian now embroiders the dull hours of her domestic life with imagined meetings and partings, the sweet review of past embraces and the hunger for possible embraces to come, which for Minot constitute the better part of passion.

"So this," Lilian says to herself after a tryst with Walter, "is how my life turns out: that there are slivers into which I pack my greatest feeling, that the moments with this skittish man who appears now and then in my life are to have more power than all the days with my husband." But Minot won't let Lilian—or the reader—off so easily. What, indeed, does such "power" consist of? The invisible grip of the imagination? And what about the man in the room with her, day in and day out: doesn't his solid, visible mass have a power—at least, a physical impact—of its own? Isn't it absurd, Lilian asks herself, to ascribe depth to feelings that are "more intense" because they are "precarious"? Which *is* her real life—the life she lives or the life she dreams? Each has its province in her thoughts. The book never answers the twin questions it poses: Is it folly to marry a decent man you will inevitably lose passion for? Or folly to love, intermittently but passionately, a man who will never share your life?

In the end, Minot's novel ranges beyond the cramped, tail-chasing circle of these riddles. The way a girl marries—foolishly or soundly, depending on your reading of Lilian's situation—is her apparent subject, but her episodic approach to narrative allows her to cover much more ground. Like "Monkeys," where the kids' whole childhood is set forth in nine scenes, from hiding in the linen closet to scattering their mother's ashes into the bay, "Folly" zooms in on discrete moments throughout Lilian's

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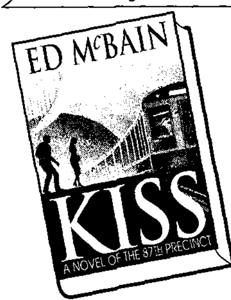

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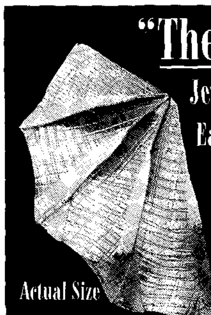

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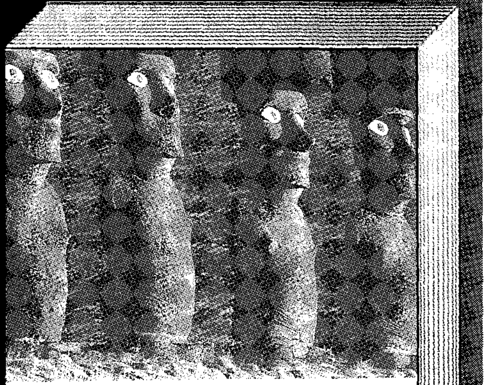

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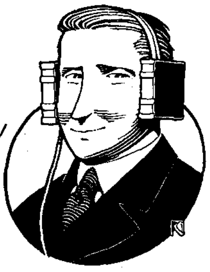

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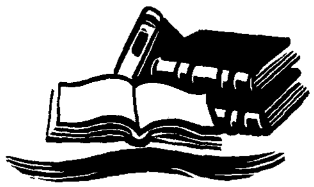
life—not just on the milestones, like a nervous breakdown that her husband suffers, or her brushes with infidelity, but on incidental conversations at birthday parties, and quiet revelations in the sewing room. As these moments accrue, the novel takes us far beyond Lilian's initial disillusionment with marriage and the dawning of her restlessness. The book isn't about a woman's loss of innocence so much as about what follows it: that long afternoon of years that aren't really early and aren't quite middle—her twenties, thirties, and the edge of her forties, during which she gradually bids goodbye to her innocence, her youth, and the bloom of her beauty.

And often, as in Lilian's case, to her parents. One day, Lilian is called to Brookline because her senile mother has gone missing. Mrs. Eliot is quickly found: she is standing in the driveway of her old friend Agnes's house, though Agnes has been dead for ten years. Lilian explains, not knowing what else to say to her confused mother, that Agnes and her husband are "away." Her mother wants to know who's going to cut back the roses in Agnes's yard, since their gardener doesn't do it right. "Was this how one ended up?" a now forty-year-old, self-possessed Lilian wonders. "Worrying about roses, visiting the dead?" The loss of her parents, her brother's return for their burials, and Lilian and Gilbert's move out to the old house in Brookline aren't necessary to the plot of "Folly," but these changes give the novel its resonance, and a shapeliness it wouldn't have had without them. A chapter about Mr. Eliot's last neighborhood walk before he dies—on its face entirely superfluous to the story of Lilian's romantic trials—is a breathtaking stretch of writing. The jaws of a black dog snapping at the air as Mr. Eliot slowly passes by make you shiver. This is Minot at her uncanny best—somewhere along the road to Lilian's maturity Minot has settled comfortably into her oddly antiquated language. In any language, it turns out, she is a natural at writing about the life of a family—the bustling years of its prominence, when the children are still at home, and then the long slope of its decline after they depart—and Lilian's prime stands out in sharper relief against the bulk of this slowly weathering monument. ♦



BOOKS BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

Natural History
by Maureen Howard (Norton; $22.95)

BILLY BRAY is a fat and upright investigative cop in Second World War Bridgeport, where his wife suffers him in faded gentility, in the large house she has inherited. Their daughter, fat like her father and alleged to be smart, is crushed—figuratively and then, to bring the point home, by a car—when she loses a history competition to girls who have woven a rug using Colonial techniques. Her brother, by contrast, is all charm, good looks, and tricks. He grows up to be a movie star, while the sister becomes a spinner and weaver who uses Colonial techniques (and becomes a winner, the best in her profession). It takes about four hundred pages to get these facts across. The prose is both breathless and clotted, as though what is being related were too terrible to say, too urgent not to say, and too disturbing to say clearly. Much is made of the spinster's being a spinner; of Bridgeport history; and of a murder investigation by the father, who maybe wasn't so upright after all, which is the closest the book comes to having a plot.

Fantastic Tales
by I. U. Tarchetti, translated from the Italian by Lawrence Venuti
(Mercury House; $25)

TARCHETTI died in 1869, at twenty-nine, having stirred up Italian literary circles with two novels, countless newspaper articles, and the first gothic stories published in Italian—the "Fantastic Tales" that make up the present volume, which is the first translation of Tarchetti into English. In a professorial introduction Mr. Venuti presents a solid outline of Tarchetti's life amid the political turmoil of nineteenth-century Italy, and his translation distills a gothic style never heard before, a mixture of Northern shadows and Southern shimmer. Romantic sentiment and modern neurosis are entwined in the stories: the celebrated but deformed violin virtuoso of "Bouvard" creates his most soaring music before the corpse of a lovely patrician girl he could not win in life; "The Letter U" is the absurd memoir of a man driven to madness by that vowel's "fatal outline, its two detested shafts, its abhorrent curve." Like the kneecap used as a paperweight in "A Dead Man's Bone," these stories are macabre curios that have unexpected power.

GENERAL

Henry James: The Imagination of Genius
by Fred Kaplan (Morrow; $25)

IT turns out that Leon Edel's magisterial multivolume work did not preëmpt James biography: this is a crisp, attractive, and astute life. Mr. Kaplan is outspoken but not heavy-handed in discussing the tyranny of James's ostensibly loving and permissive father and the son's repressed homosexuality. And he's enlightening about James's finances, the unremitting labor by which he supported himself, and his disappointment in his old age at finding himself more admired than enjoyed. James is revealed as someone loving and lonely; guarding his privacy, he insured that his sociability always stopped short of intimacy, and the withdrawals that his nature demanded often left him alone with his art. Mr. Kaplan believes that William James oversimplified his younger brother's complex personality, refusing to see much further than Henry's "gentleness" and "innocence." Nevertheless, William was partly right: Mr. Kaplan's James has a fundamental sweetness and, though scarcely naïve, is essentially disinterested.

The Anatomy of the Nuremberg Trials: A Personal Memoir
by Telford Taylor (Knopf; $35)

TOWARD the end of the Second World War, the author joined the legal staff of Supreme Court Justice Robert H. Jackson, whom the President had appointed to represent the United States in the prosecution of war criminals by an international tribunal. His recollections offer the delights of the personal—what everybody looked like and how everybody got along (feuds and flirtations), and how the court and its personnel lived. But the book is also a thoughtful, readable course in international law. Mr. Taylor begins by explaining that a series of conventions and treaties, starting with an 1864 international agreement on the treatment of the wounded, had been violated by the Nazis in their conduct of the war. He describes the difficulties of holding an international trial, among them the need to reconcile the Anglo-American and the Continental legal systems and such practical matters as finding people to translate and copy documents. Mr. Taylor is extremely critical, and even severe, as personalities, theories, and outcomes are scrutinized anew. Yet his final judgment of Nuremberg is that the trials, imperfect as they may have been, were an immense moral advance—a lesson, a precedent, and a warning.

A Walk Through Wales
by Anthony Bailey (HarperCollins; $23)

A SEDUCTIVE account of a journey on foot over the length of Wales, south to north, from Cardiff to Bangor. The author specializes in walking as a salutary adjunct to writing, and, carrying only what he could stuff into his backpack, he travelled on country lanes and mountain paths, and through cities, towns, and hamlets, pausing in medieval castles and in coal-mining valleys to pry out the history of the Welsh and their land. Once or twice, he visited inns that had accommodated another peripatetic literary man, George Borrow, well over a century before. Mr. Bailey is an attentive and retentive listener to the many people he runs across, and an observer who misses practically nothing. As a portrait of Wales today, this book is unmatched.

FROM OUR PAGES

A Woman Kneeling in the Big City, a collection of poetry by Elizabeth Macklin, has been published by Norton ($18.95). Many of the poems first appeared in *The New Yorker.*

Chinatown: A Portrait of a Closed Society, by Gwen Kinkead, has been published by HarperCollins ($23). Much of the contents first appeared here.

SHOUTS AND MURMURS

HOSTILE HAIRCUTS

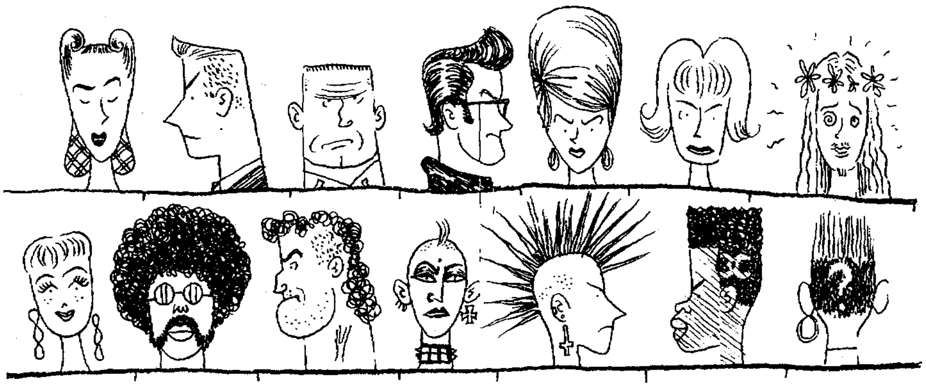
by John Updike

NOW that I am sixty, I see why the idea of elder wisdom has passed from currency. My thoughts have become not only fewer and smaller but more spiteful and timorous. The impression has been growing upon me that I am surrounded by hostile haircuts. When African-American males first began to cut their hair in skull-capping muffins sharply differentiated from shaved sides sometimes ornamented with "X"s and other brandlike symbols, I assumed that, within a long history of experimentation that ranged from conking to the Afro, an intraracial code was being playfully augmented, with no special message for me. When young white men took up the same style, however, menace began to emanate as surely as from a crowd of Marine crewcuts or F.B.I.-style tight trims. Prior to 1960, now that I think upon it, all men's haircuts expressed a slight hostility, a simmer of close-clipped individual militance, whose subtext was "Don't mess with [muss] me." On the distaff side, those lacquered hairdos from forties Hollywood were as virginity-defensive as iron chastity belts; the height of untouchability was reached with the beehive, which abruptly collapsed into the limp ironed hair of the counterculture, signalling a state of stoned acquiescence.

Honestly, I don't recall feeling especially threatened by sixties long hair, at least not after my sons, still cherubically freckle-faced, adopted it. True, some male faces, wearing a scruffy mat down to the shoulders, with a beard thrown in for good measure, appeared the opposite of pacified. Wasn't facial hair, the evolutionists argued, a trait worth preserving, because men could scare each other with it in battle? My main sensation of the long-hair era, however, was the disconcerting sexual confusion of being unable to gender-identify an attractive figure from the back, as it sashayed along with locks flowing down to its hips. Now, seeing a young male whose ostentatiously leonine hair has been cropped on the sides in what I think of as normal fashion but is encouraged to cascade in a Samsonesque mane down over his nape, I have no trouble recognizing hostility.

When the sweet-mannered bespectacled young woman at the local library shaved off all her hair but a tuft she dyed cerise, I rather desperately tried to believe she was not out to get me. She continued to twinkle behind her glasses, and to stamp the due date. The seventies Mohawk, after all, had been somewhat defused by splashes of color, its fierce statement removed to a theatrical realm of outrageous costume. In the movie "The Last of the Mohicans," I am assured in these very pages, Daniel Day-Lewis sports a "really terrific head of hair . . . rock-star hair . . . greasy enough to shine with rebel integrity, yet not so disgusting that we start wondering what Hawkeye smells like." Native American haircuts (hostile to white invaders and swindlers) are a grease layer's thickness removed from rocker haircuts (hostile to family values, bourgeois repression, and regular hours). English punk haircuts (hostile to the upper class and fans of foreign soccer teams) are to be distinguished from American punk haircuts (hostile to Mom, Dad, and high-school dress codes). One day, the young woman wore a bandanna over her cerise topknot, meaning either that the head librarian had spoken sternly to her or that she was experimenting with degrees of hostility, as Venetian blinds experiment with degrees of sunlight.

Not all haircuts are hostile in the same way. Sinéad O'Connor's is screamingly, overtly hostile, for instance, whereas Ross Perot may even think his is friendly. Ted Koppel's swooping bang is slyly but purposefully hostile—a shield of hair interposed to protect his frontal lobes from insidious waves of interviewee charm and blather. Bill Clinton's hair, closely modelled on the opossum fur of his beloved Arkansas, manages to say yes and no to hostility at once, appearing both cuddly and spiky, and, in any case, composed of an unidentifiable salt-and-pepper substance, like markproof carpeting. It's a hairily cruel world, I've decided. Snip or be *snipped*. We're all butting for psychological space, and leading with our warheads. ♦



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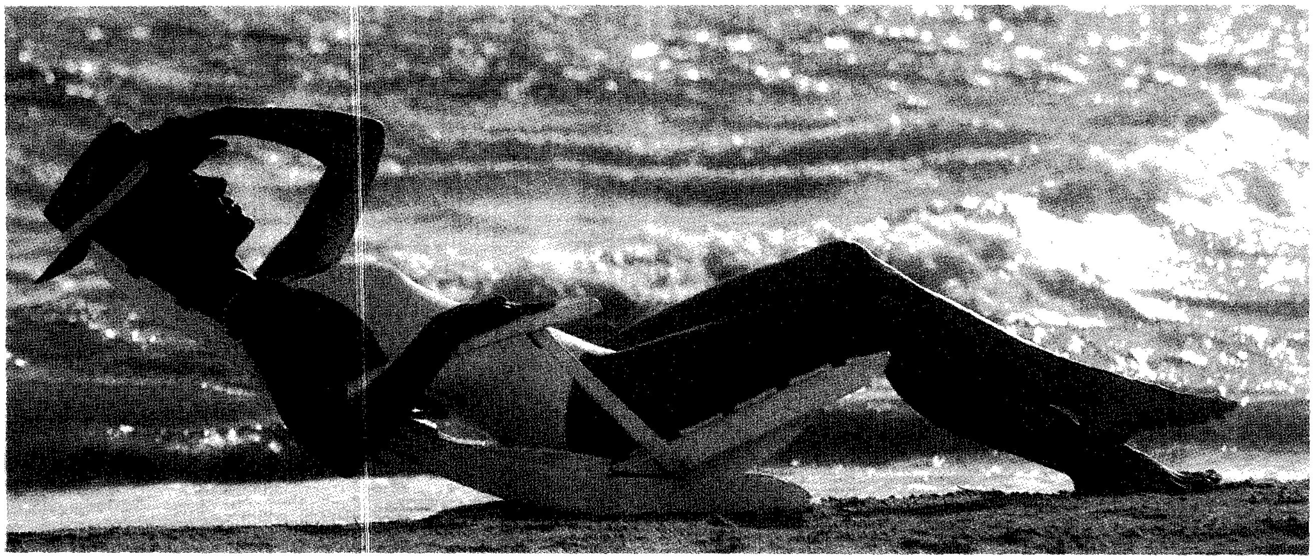

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